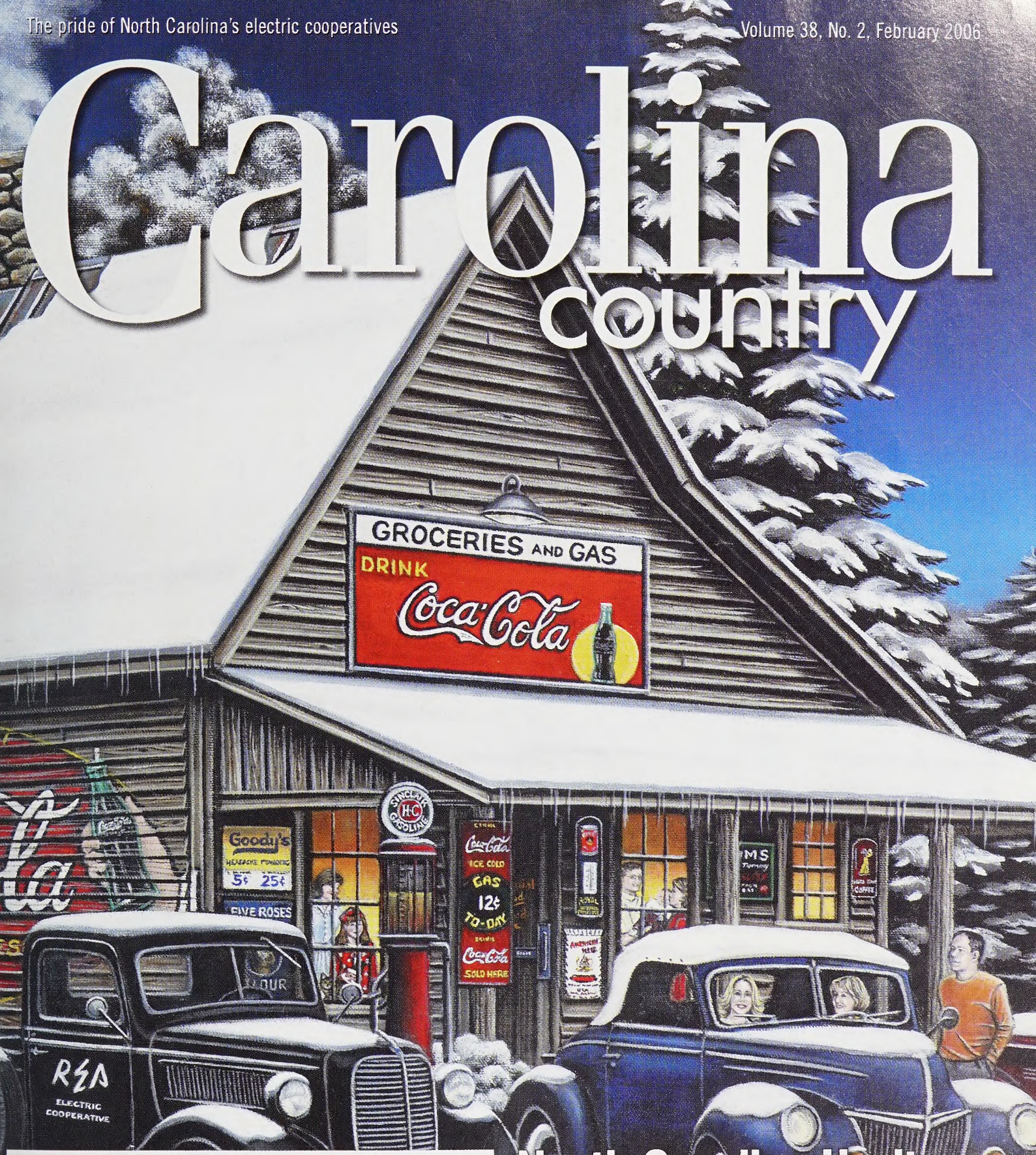
The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 38, No. 2, February 2006

Carolina country



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North Carolina Heritage

INSIDE:

Co-ops Bring Power to Rural N.C.
Remembering when the lights came on

We Made History
Your family contributions to our great state

A Guide to North Carolina's Electric Utilities—pages 14–15

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North Carolina's electric cooperatives provide reliable, safe and affordable electric service to 850,000 homes, farms and businesses in North Carolina. The 27 electric cooperatives are each member-owned, not-for-profit and overseen by a board of directors elected by the membership.

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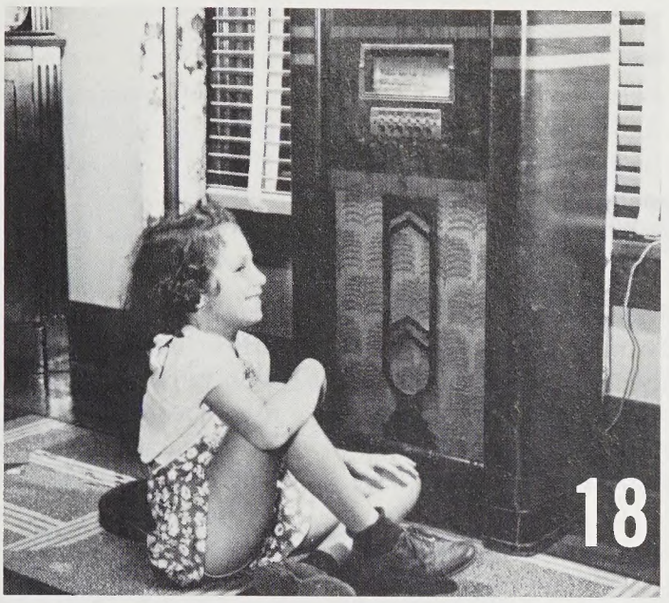

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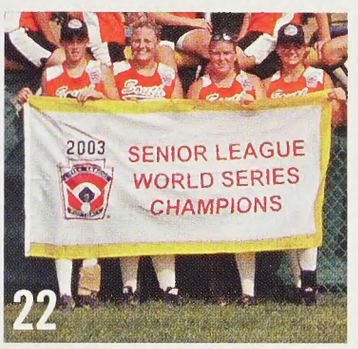

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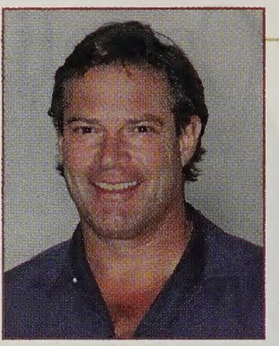

How history helps

By Michael E.C. Gery

We love telling the history of electric cooperatives. It's one of the all-time best success stories of American business. It also helps to remind people who are new to cooperatives, or whose memories aren't as clear as some of ours, how we began as essential utilities, and how we grew and held our own.

You can read more about this in the pages of the magazine this month.

Most familiar of all the stories is the one that begins in the Great Depression when farms and rural residents through the United States had no electric power, even as their neighbors in urban areas had enjoyed electricity for a generation. It was just too expensive for power companies to build and maintain systems way out in the country, especially during hard economic times. One of the federal programs devised to relieve the suffering of the Great Depression was the Rural Electrification Administration, established in 1935 to loan money to organizations whose mission was to supply electricity to those areas that did not have it. Among other stipulations, the organizations had to be not-for-profit cooperatives composed of members who would join voluntarily, pay a membership fee and have a vote in the affairs of the business.

As in all states that formed electric cooperatives in the 1930s and 1940s, North Carolina had its share of visionaries who set up the cooperative properly, invited neighbors to join, applied for the loan and coordinated building the poles and lines and acquiring the power. The late Joe Pendry of Boonville in Yadkin County remembered working on the farm all day then setting out at night to get members. "You had to get so many signers," he said. "And there wasn't a lot of money around in those days, so I paid the five dollars for a lot of them just so they could get lights. I paid some of their power bills back then, too."

Citizens would band together and make momentous trips to Raleigh and Washington to present their case for forming a cooperative. They might have made a deal with a local business that generated electricity. Then they hired crews to set poles and run line, and invariably the local people helped them every step of the way. Hubert Prevatte of Pembroke remembered, "I took my own team of horses and pulled line through the Lumber River swamp because the cooperative did not have equipment at that time to go over these rough places. And when we got to the river with the lines, then the neighbors got together with the construction crew and pulled the lines by hand across the river. Swam the river and pulled the lines across."

And Shirley Collier of Hope Mills remembered that as a girl, "I saw them out there the day before, and we were all so excited the next day in school that we could hardly set down. Couldn't wait to get home and turn on them lights. We had the ones with a string that you pull. I know we probably pulled them a hundred times a day 'til we got used to it."

Because of this kind of beginning, and because we always have been owned and managed by their members, cooperatives naturally conduct all our business solely for the benefit of our members. We hired "advisors" whose job was to visit members and teach them the smart uses of electric power and how to choose and operate appliances. We published newsletters regularly to inform members of activities within and affecting the cooperatives. We employed liaisons to represent the cooperatives in federal, state and local government. We hired and trained local people to work as linemen, member service representatives, engineers and managers. (And we still do all this.)

After World War II, North Carolina's cooperatives were like local heroes. Everyone wanted us, including the bigger, established power companies, who in some cases saw the young bucks as a threat.

"They tried to paint the co-op program as something sinister, a little worse than a socialist," remembered Heyward H. McKinney, who was manager of Pee Dee Electric Membership Corporation in Wadesboro at the time. "They would not accept the fact that nonprofit co-op service organizations are just as much a part of our free enterprise system as private enterprise and partnerships."

In 1950, we formed a state association to perform services for us collectively, including defending ourselves from elimination, publishing a monthly magazine and training line crews and other staff. In 1958, we formed a statewide cooperative to buy, generate and transmit electric power for all of us.

Over the years, cooperatives nationally have seen a few attempts by the White House and Congress to dissolve or weaken us, but our amazingly strong grassroots support has convinced lawmakers and policymakers to leave well enough alone. R.B. Sloan Jr., who is CEO of the EnergyUnited co-op in Statesville and a former state senator, has seen the effect firsthand from both sides. "Legislators understand that electric cooperatives make decisions based on what is best for their consumers," he said. "Electric cooperative representatives from across the state communicate directly with their legislators to make sure cooperative interests are understood and appreciated. Legislators deciding on a vote may look into the General Assembly's gallery and see dozens of cooperative board members and staff from across the state. That sends a powerful message."

Cooperatives in this state staked our claim once again in 1965 when the legislature enacted what is known as the "Territory Law." And the same "consumers first" message prevailed when we worked with the legislature on the recent agreement with municipal utilities on service territories. (See pages 12–15.)

Being part of a program with this kind of history brings us a certain pride and comfort. In 1948 he became general manager of Blue Ridge EMC in Lenoir, but when he was a young electrical engineer just out of N. C. State University, Cecil E. Viverette went to work for Carolina Power and Light Company until 1940 when he announced a job offer from the Randolph EMC co-op in Asheboro. His supervisors nearly shouted him out of the room. "They saw co-ops as being nothing more than a flour mill on the creek," he remembered." "I had never heard such cussing in my life! They put down the co-op program so hard. And the more they put it down, the more I wanted to work for it."

Relations with other utilities are much better now, but we'd still rather be part of a cooperative.

Those darned dogs

During one of the rainstorms a while back our dogs wanted to go out, but they didn't want to get wet. They are Sunnie (the mastiff) and Chopper (the Doberman).

The Locklears
Rockingham

This is Ann Jones of Westfield dressed as a farm girl with her dog, B.J. They are returning from the pumpkin patch.

Betty M. Overby
Westfield

I was talking with my 6-year-old grandson, Jonathan Greene, one time about dogs. I asked him if he knew that Uncle Scott's dog was going to have some more puppies. He looked at me surprisingly and asked, "Nana, who did she marry this time?"

Doris Ferguson
Huntersville

There are thousands of homeless animals right here in North Carolina. My heart bleeds for all of them.

I have plenty of cats and kittens, three large dogs outside, a full-grown rabbit outside, chickens, two guineas, drakes, hens, a cockatoo, two parakeets, a bulldog inside and a turtle named Lucky. None of them are up for adoption.

I know of a little beagle at Snow Hill who is up for adoption. It's a small price to pay for something to love and hold and cuddle, to meet you at the door and welcome you home. A dog like this should not be put down. If you know dogs like her, please help them.

If everyone opens up their hearts and adopts one pet, there would not be any homeless ones anywhere, and no graveyards full of them.

I lost some precious pets, and my heart aches because of it. Freckles loved a big hug. Her name was Sassy, too. She'd go play with the neighbor's dog and come back here and go right into her pen. Dutchess and Sweetie always loved to climb up into my arms. They were short, little dachshunds. Shep was like Lassie, so sweet and shaggy and lovely. Forest could not walk, so he crawled everywhere to eat and drink on his belly. My granddaughter wanted to name him Forest, so we started calling him Forest and tried teaching him to walk. He lived for over a year before he passed. I did everything in my power for him to make it.

Letha Humphrey
Snow Hill

Our favorite Floridian

I really look forward to receiving my Carolina Country in the mail each month. You do such a great job. You all just keep getting better all the time.

The personal contest winners—and your trying to pick a few from the 200 or so entries—must be a terrific job. They are so interesting. Some make me "homesick." I lived in good old eastern North Carolina from 1959 to 1986 and still go back a couple times a year.

The first place we went to in 1956 was to Brevard, Pisgah Forest and the Looking Glass Falls before they had that nice platform and steps. I saved the front cover photo you published in July 1992 because I remember the June day when I was standing down as far as we could walk and feeling that cool mist hit my face. A couple years ago I renewed that cool feeling at Dry Falls where you can walk underneath the falls and feel the spray on you. Oh just think of that in the warm summer!

I enjoy Joyner's puzzles.

I enjoy the gardening guide and the annual one you put out in March. I keep them all. I enjoy James Dulley's informative page and your April travel issue also.

I would order your magazine even if I ever leave the Pee Dee EMC electric co-op.

Thank you.

Jean Harrison Thompson
Jacksonville, Fla., and Rockingham, N.C.

Correction

The North Shelby School kitchen did not suffer from a fire, as reported in the January issue's article, "Fulfilling hopes and dreams at Aunt Marilyn's farm." We regret the error.

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Advertisement

Homemaker Invents A Shine That Lasts

Miracle Polish Ends Struggle With Tarnishing Metals. By D.H. Wagner

Lately, I have noticed quite a few newspapers and magazines praising a polish formulated by a homemaker. The articles report that Donna Maas grew frustrated with rubbing and scrubbing her silver, brass and other metals only to see them quickly become dull and tarnished again. Determined to put an end to her constant battle with tarnish, Donna formulated a metal cleaner and it's transforming the industry.

Anita Gold, nationally syndicated columnist and expert on the restoration of antiques calls MAAS (named after its inventor) "The best and most amazing polish in the world." Ms. Gold wrote in her column, "A truly miraculous polish referred to as "miracle polish" that'll turn the most disastrous pieces into the most de-bright-ful is MAAS Fine Polishing Creme For All Metals, which cleans, restores, preserves and polishes to perfection any brass, copper, chrome, silver, stainless steel, aluminum, gold or any other metal with amazing results - no matter how badly stained, spotted, discolored, flood-damaged, weathered, dirty, dingy, drab, or dull they may be."

Since I had an old brass lamp in desperate need of restoration, this journalist decided to put MAAS to the test. The lamp had been stored in the garage and was in far worse condition than I remembered. I was flabbergasted as I watched the polish wipe away layers and years of tarnish. Never have I used anything so easy. The lamp actually looks better than when I purchased it. Better yet, months later it's still glowing!

The polish worked so effortlessly, I decided to refurbish my mother's antique brass and copper cookware. The badly stained pots and pans developed black spots that had been impossible to remove. MAAS wiped away years of built-up residue even from the most discolored pieces. While polishing, I noticed MAAS applying a shine on the stainless steel sink. WOW! The shine is

unbelievable and although I wash dishes every day, the shine keeps-on-shining. And it's no longer covered with ugly water spots, water just rolls off the protective finish and down the drain.

An independent consumer study of 28 metal polishes reports, "MAAS Polishing Creme has no equals in all around polishing performance..." MAAS retained its shine longer than every polish tested. **Good Housekeeping Institute** recommends MAAS for restoring heavily tarnished heirlooms stating, "MAAS cleans best and gives lasting results." The Miami Herald says, "Polishing product can renew old silver." The Chicago Tribune headline sums it all up by saying "One Amazing Polish Is The Best At Everything."

How did a homemaker come up with something the industry's experts couldn't? The reporter in me had to find out.

During our interview Donna explained, "I enjoy the warmth that beautifully polished metals add to a home. However, not the hours it took to keep them tarnish free. The harsh cleaners left my hands dry and burning - one instant silver dip smelled so bad I felt sick. When I read the label, I discovered it contained cancer-causing ingredients! That's when I became determined to find a better way to care for the metals in my home."

And that she did. Her formula developed with a chemist friend quickly restores and leaves a deep, rich one-of-a-kind luster beyond anything I've ever seen.

"To my surprise," Donna reveals, "the formula far exceeded my original goal. MAAS restores glass fireplace doors, clouded crystal vases, fiberglass, linoleum even plastic. The restorations were so remarkable everyone suggested that I sell my invention on television".

Donna sent samples of her polish to televised shopping channels and both QVC and Home Shopping Network asked Donna to personally appear on TV to demonstrate her product. 17,000 viewers called during MAAS' debut and encore performances brought a million dollars in record-breaking sales.

Leona Toppel, was about to throw away a brass chandelier. "No amount of elbow grease could shine it up. With very little effort (a big plus since I suffer from arthritis) MAAS made that chandelier look like new. It's been years and to everyone's surprise it's still glowing."

"MAAS outperforms every polish I've tried," Donna beams with satisfaction. "So if you're as tired as I was of cleaning metals just to see tarnish reappear a few weeks later, MAAS it!"

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In PA, Mrs. M.R. Mitter wrote "I've never watered it, only when I put the plugs in...Last summer we had it mowed 2 times...When everybody's lawns here are brown from drought, ours stays as green as ever." *That's how zoysia lawns cut water bills and mowing! Now read on!*

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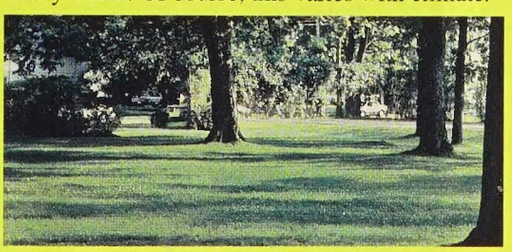

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Touchstone Energy® basketball camp scholarships

North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives are offering basketball camp scholarships for up to 27 young women and 27 young men.

Touchstone Energy Sports Camps Scholarships are available for the Kay Yow Basketball Camp at North Carolina State University for female students in grades 6 to 8 and to the Roy Williams Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for male students in grades 6 to 8.

Applications for both camps will be accepted through March 31, 2006. Winners will be announced by May 1.

Winners of the Touchstone Energy Kay Yow Basketball Camp scholarship will attend the overnight basketball camp from June 18–22. Winners of the Touchstone Energy Roy Williams Basketball Camp scholarship will attend the overnight camp from June 11–15. Campers must have permission from a parent or guardian to attend either camp and must provide their own transportation to and from the camp.

Sixth through eighth grade students interested in the scholarships can contact their local electric cooperative or Suzanne Ward at the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives: (800)-662-8835, extension 2430 or via e-mail at suzanne.ward@ncemcs.com.

Students can also download applications for the scholarships at www.ncemcs.com. Applicants will be judged on their academics, extracurricular activities and an essay that must accompany the application.

Visit www.kayyowcamps.com to learn more about the Kay Yow Basketball Camp. For information on the Roy Williams Basketball Camp call (919) 967-0663.

Albemarle EMC donates three transformers to Costa Rican community substation

Chris Powell

Glenn Parks, crew leader for Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation, helps guide one of three decommissioned transformers onto a flatbed truck. The transformers were sent to Costa Rica.

As part of an international assistance program, Albemarle EMC sent three decommissioned transformers to Costa Rica.

The three transformers will be used by the Costa Rican government agency Instituto Costarricense de Electricidad to add capacity to a substation located in Muelle that serves the community of Pocosol. About 3,200 consumers will benefit from this improvement, said Larry Thomas, operations specialist with National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International.

"This is actually improving an area that, because of electricity, has developed into an industrial and residential area," Thomas said. "Because the industry has increased, the load has increased, and because the load has increased, they have almost had to do rolling blackouts. These transformers are going to solve that situation."

Albemarle EMC had previously replaced those older transformers at their Winfall substation with a unit that handles considerably more load. The three decommissioned transformers were left idle until they could be provided to NRECA International. If Costa Rica had to purchase the three transformers, it would have cost just under $50,000.

Brad Furr, technical services manager for Albemarle EMC, said that the co-op was happy to donate the transformers that otherwise would have had to be scrapped. "As a cooperative, we routinely give and receive assistance from other co-ops," Furr said. "We are very pleased to be able to extend that concept across international borders."

Since first being contracted in 1962 by the U.S. Agency for International Development to provide assessments and services in Nicaragua, NRECA International has helped more than 70 million people in more than 35 countries gain access to electricity.

Tax incentives take effect

The Energy Policy Act of 2005, the national energy law that became effective in August 2005, provides federal income tax credits for consumers and businesses who purchase fuel-efficient hybrid-electric vehicles and who make certain, specified energy-efficiency upgrades to their homes in 2006 and 2007.

The new rules governing the tax credits were still being written at press time. Once the rules are finalized, the magazine will publish a summary of the programs. Credits will be for improvements and purchases made in 2006 and 2007.

Meantime, for more information:

The Alliance to Save Energy
1200 18th Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 857-0666
www.ase.org/content/article/detail/2654
www.energytaxincentives.org

N.C. power supplier ranks 3rd in nation among cooperatives

Revenues to the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC), which supplies wholesale electric power to 26 of the state's electric cooperatives, ranked third-highest among energy cooperatives nationwide in 2004, according to the National Cooperative Bank.

The NCB Co-op 100, the only annual report of its kind to track revenues generated by cooperatives, further indicates the strength and yearly growth of these businesses nationwide.

"Overall, the nation's top 100 cooperatives increased revenues by almost $15 billion in 2004, a 14 percent gain on the same period last year and the highest-ever yearly revenue," said Charles E. Snyder, president and CEO of NCB. "This double-digit growth, rarely experienced in other business sectors, further demonstrates the vital role of cooperatives in the marketplace and the financial stability they bring to communities nationwide."

North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

In 2004, energy cooperatives had 13 businesses ranking in the NCB's Top 100 Co-ops, and a 10 percent increase in revenues from the previous year.

Highest ranked of energy cooperatives at number 24 on the overall list is Oglethorpe Power Corporation, which supplies wholesale power to Georgia's electric cooperatives, followed by Seminole Electric Cooperative at 41, which serves cooperatives in 26 Florida counties. NCEMC was ranked 47.

According to the National Cooperative Business Association, there are nearly 40,000 cooperatives in the United States. These entities exist in a cross-section of sectors, including agriculture, grocery, hardware and lumber, finance, energy, housing and others. Many cooperatives on the NCB Co-op 100 list are household names such as ACE Hardware, Land O'Lakes and The Associated Press.

WHERE IN CAROLINA COUNTRY IS THIS?

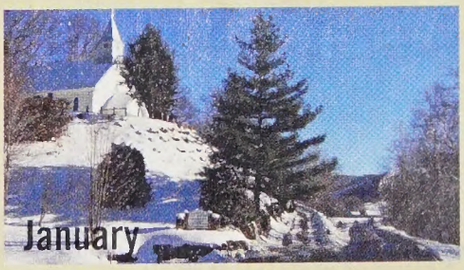
This is a Carolina Country scene in Touchstone Energy territory. If you know where it is, send your answer by Feb. 7 with your name, address, phone number and the name of your electric cooperative.

By e-mail: where@carolinacountry.com

Or by mail: Where in Carolina Country?
P.O. Box 27306
Raleigh, NC 27611.

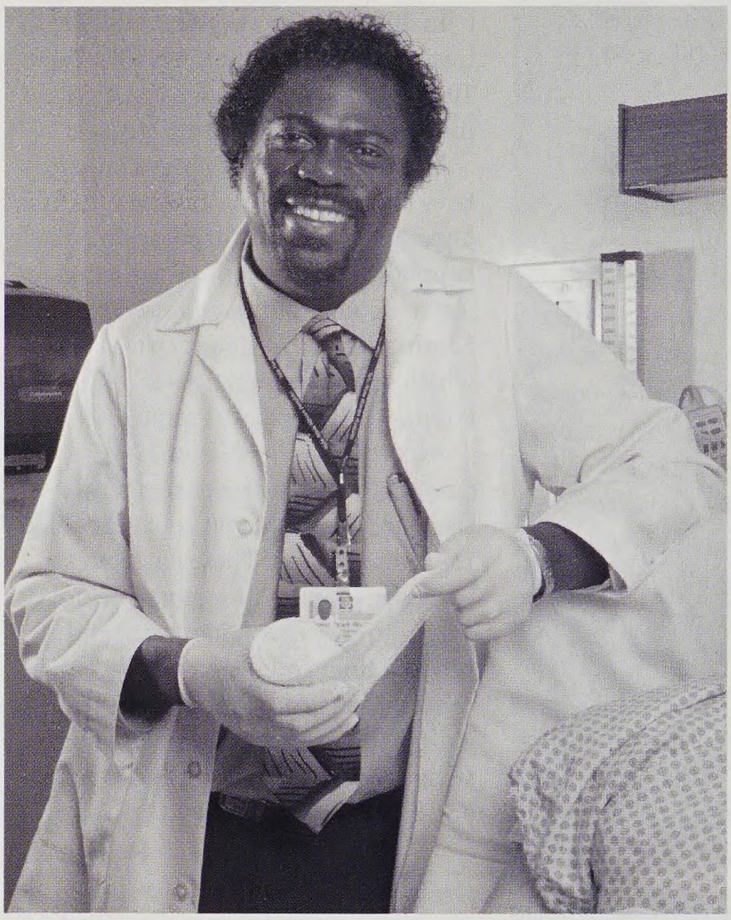
The winner, chosen at random and announced in our March issue, will receive $25.

The Winner:
The scene in the January magazine showed the Sutherland United Methodist Church in the Sutherland community of western Ashe County, in Blue Ridge Electric territory. John LaRue submitted the photo. The road is off Hwy. 88 West and runs up the valley to Potter Town and over Snake Mountain (headwaters of the New River) and down to Meat Camp in Watauga County. Correct answers were numbered and the $25 winner chosen at random was Joanne H. Kemp of Warrensville, a member of Blue Ridge Electric.



Thanks

to those who care about the North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center



The Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of North Carolina hosted a golf tournament in October 2005 that raised more than $80,000 for the North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center's "Learn Not to Burn" program. The program sends specialists (such as Outreach Clinician Ernest Grant, shown above) to make presentations to schools, fire departments, senior citizens, Jaycees and other community organizations. Many serious injuries and fatalities are prevented each year because children and adults learn not to burn.

Listed here are the major donors to the golf tournament. The cooperatives also are grateful to the many other businesses and individuals who contributed to the success of the tournament.

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A special thank you to NRTC for supplying tournament golf balls, to Cardinal Travel and US Airways for sponsoring the Hole-in-One contest, and to TEMA for sponsoring the hospitality suite.

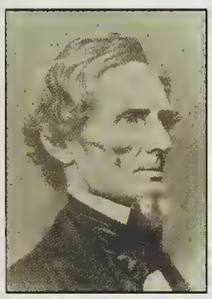
Exclusive Proof Minting in Pure .999 Silver

Confederate Half Dollar Stolen from President Sells for $632,000.00

Richmond, VA.—Headlines were made recently when a mysterious 1861 silver U.S. half dollar bearing the seal of the Confederacy sold at public auction for the incredible sum of $632,500.00. Experts have learned it is just one of four coins produced after the United States Mint in New Orleans was seized by rebels at the start of the Civil War.

Unique Coin of Both North and South

The Confederate silver half dollar is unique because it is the only coin to have the images of both North and South on one coin. One side has the United States design of Miss Liberty, while the other side has a Confederate States shield and the legend: "Confederate States of America".



Jefferson Davis

One of the coins was given to the President of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis. He carried it in his pocket as a personal "good luck" piece.

In honor of this discovery, the First Federal Mint has released a pure .999 silver Proof, die-struck in deep dimension just like the coin minted for President Jefferson Davis. The issue price is $50.00, but for a limited time only you may acquire it at the Advance Release price of $29.50.

Mint Ransacked by General "Beast" Butler

Union General Benjamin "Beast" Butler recaptured the New Orleans Mint from the Rebels in 1862. The "Beast" earned his nickname for his ruthless reign as military governor of New Orleans.

General Benjamin "Beast" Butler

Panicked Confederate Mint officials had already loaded up all of the bullion from the New Orleans Mint and shipped it up the Mississippi to avoid plunder. Thus did the dream of a Confederate coinage come to an end.

Stolen, Then Vanished

In 1865 Federal troops captured President Davis in Georgia. Davis hid his beloved "lucky coin" in his belongings when he was sent to Fort Monroe, Virginia. "Beast" Butler commanded the fort. When one of Butler's officers searched Davis' possessions, the precious coin was stolen. It disappeared for many years; the hands it passed through are a mystery to this day. The reappearance and sale of this legendary coin for $632,000.00 made headlines in the collecting world.

Actual size is 30.6 mm

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Christian Gobrecht (North)
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How the General Assembly Clarified State Law Governing

Utility Service Territories

Electric cooperatives advocated on behalf of their members to reach agreement with municipal electric utilities

By Andrew Meehan

The mission of electric cooperatives to serve their members was exemplified recently when they worked with the state legislature on an agreement to resolve a decades-old dispute about how far municipalities can extend their electric power systems. The cooperatives continually maintained the respect of General Assembly representatives during the sometimes contentious negotiations, which played a large part in the eventual outcome.

At the core of the issues is the urbanization and housing developments that have spread into fields where farmers once grew tobacco and other crops. Cooperatives and their members have for decades paid to build power lines in rural areas. But as cities expanded into the countryside, the electric power systems owned by those cities have encroached into areas long served by electric cooperatives. When two power providers each build power lines to an area, all consumers pay for unnecessary lines.

"If an electric cooperative has power lines in an area, there's no benefit for consumers when another utility builds a second, unnecessary line," said Jeff Edwards, executive vice president and general manager of Albemarle EMC in Hertford. "Overhead power lines cost more than $60,000 per mile, and all consumers pay those costs in their electric rates. Cooperative members deserve to receive the best possible return on their investments. Due to an outdated law, some cooperatives were losing millions of dollars in revenue because they were prevented from serving customers located directly adjacent to existing cooperative lines."

What does the new law mean for co-op members?

Electric cooperatives are non-profit providers of electric power, and all costs for providing power are passed directly to consumers through rates. Accordingly, cooperative consumer-members benefit from any reduction in costs or increase in revenue. North Carolina's electric cooperatives fought hard for passage of Senate Bill 512, because for some cooperatives the bill will increase revenue from power line investments while improving efficiency.

Senate Bill 512 changes the state's Territory Law, which governs the service obligations of each electric utility in the state. The law was passed in 1965, before many municipalities were expanding into cooperative service territory and expanding their municipal power lines as well. The new legislation modernizes the Territory Law, providing a new framework for determining which electric service provider will serve growing areas of the state. The modernized law will create more efficiency in planning for growth, a change that could save some cooperatives millions of dollars in revenue.

(Because co-ops are owned by their members, excess revenues are returned to members in the form of reduced rates or dividends known as capital credits. Lower revenues mean lower member dividends. On the flip side, a reduction in operating costs is also passed onto members through more efficient service and more affordable rates.)

Ultimately, with assistance from state legislators, a bill addressing many of the cooperative leaders' concerns was passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by the governor.

Cooperatives use grassroots base

To change the law for the benefit of their consumers, cooperatives had to build support one legislator at a time.

"Cooperative managers and board members are long-time members of the communities they serve," said Jay Rouse, director of government relations for the state's electric cooperatives. "Cooperatives are unique in the industry because legislators can put a local face to the cooperative because they just saw the board president at a community event or at church. We presented our concerns on behalf of our members. And the legislators listened and acted."

Despite their respect for electric cooperatives' reputation for member advocacy, many legislators had serious questions before agreeing to change the 40-year-old law that governs electric service in North Carolina.

In North Carolina, residents and businesses receive their electric power from one of three types of power provider: 1) not-for-profit electric cooperatives owned by their members; 2) investor-owned utilities Duke Power, Progress Energy and Dominion Power, and 3) municipalities that provide electricity as a city service to taxpayers. (See "A Guide to Electric Utilities in North Carolina, pages 14–15.) The 1965 law divided much of the state into cooperative territory and investor-owned utility territory, leaving municipal power providers free to serve any customer within city boundaries with very few limitations. Within their assigned areas, cooperatives and investor-owned utilities are obligated by law to serve any consumer in need of electricity. But under the 1965 law, municipal providers could pick and choose to serve customers outside city limits by annexing territory into the municipality.

Many municipal power providers have long been small-town systems, insulated from the growth in major urban areas. As North Carolina has experienced a growth boom over the past two decades, some cooperatives and city power systems began serving new consumers in close proximity to

each other. In some cases, customers next door to each other have different power providers.

"The inequities in this law became more apparent with each year," said Buddy Creed, vice president and CEO of South River EMC in Dunn. "And those gaps were costing consumers money."

State Sen. Dan Clodfelter from Charlotte agreed to take up the cooperative cause. To achieve success on the territory issue, cooperatives needed the support of dozens of urban legislators whose constituents had no stake in the battle, and Sen. Clodfelter was the key sponsor to convince many of those legislators.

In the House, Rep. Nelson Cole of Rockingham introduced legislation to protect cooperative service territory, and with Cole at the top the legislation garnered 53 co-sponsors.

Despite these early successes, electric cooperatives faced a tough task in the General Assembly. Electric territory law is complicated. At the start of the co-ops' legislative effort, few legislators had a true understanding of the law's intricacies.

"Legislators understand that electric cooperatives make decisions based on what is best for their consumers, who own the cooperatives," said R.B. Sloan Jr., CEO of EnergyUnited in Statesville and a former state senator. "When legislators vote on key issues, electric cooperative representatives from across the state communicate directly with their legislators to make sure cooperative interests are understood and appreciated. Legislators deciding on a vote may look into the General Assembly's gallery and see dozens of cooperative board members and staff from across the state. That sends a powerful message."

For Senate Bill 512, many legislators trusted their local electric cooperative to determine a fair solution.

"In today's political environment," said Jay Rouse, "a neighbor's handshake or a constituent's request can still carry the day. Behind those local interactions, though, you've got to have the reputation for integrity. And electric cooperatives are well-known for their integrity and commitment to community."

An 11th hour deal

For more than a year, negotiators for electric cooperatives and municipal power providers attempted unsuccessfully to reach a compromise. But in the final days before the legislation's first vote, negotiators began to work out a deal. That compromise was finalized just before the first votes were to be taken. Once the two sides came to an agreement, the resulting legislation passed without opposition.

The new law requires electric cooperatives and individual cities to work together on the local level. The utilities will make agreements on service for various areas of the state, preventing wasteful construction of power lines. The agreements will bring many areas under a more efficient system. "In the end," said Rouse, "legislators liked the local solutions contained in the bill. It's always best when the people closest to the problems can work out solutions. Thanks to our wide base of support within the cooperative community, we have a modernized law that works much better for all the state's electric consumers."

Andrew Meehan is the government affairs specialist for the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Co-sponsors for Senate bill

Key negotiators for electric cooperatives: Sen. Dan Clodfelter and Sen. Tom Apodaca.

Other co-sponsors for SB 512: Sen. Robert Holloman, Sen. Vernon Malone and Sen. Jerry Tillman. Further assistance came from Sen. R. C. Soles.

Co-sponsors for House bill

Nelson Cole
Alma Adams
Bernard Allen
Cary Allred
Larry Bell
Curtis Blackwood
Alice Bordsen
Harold Brubaker
George Cleveland
Lorene Coates
Jim Crawford
Arlie Culp
Rick Eddins
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Susan Fisher
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Melanie Goodwin
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Phil Haire
Jim Harrell
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Mark Hollo
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George Holmes
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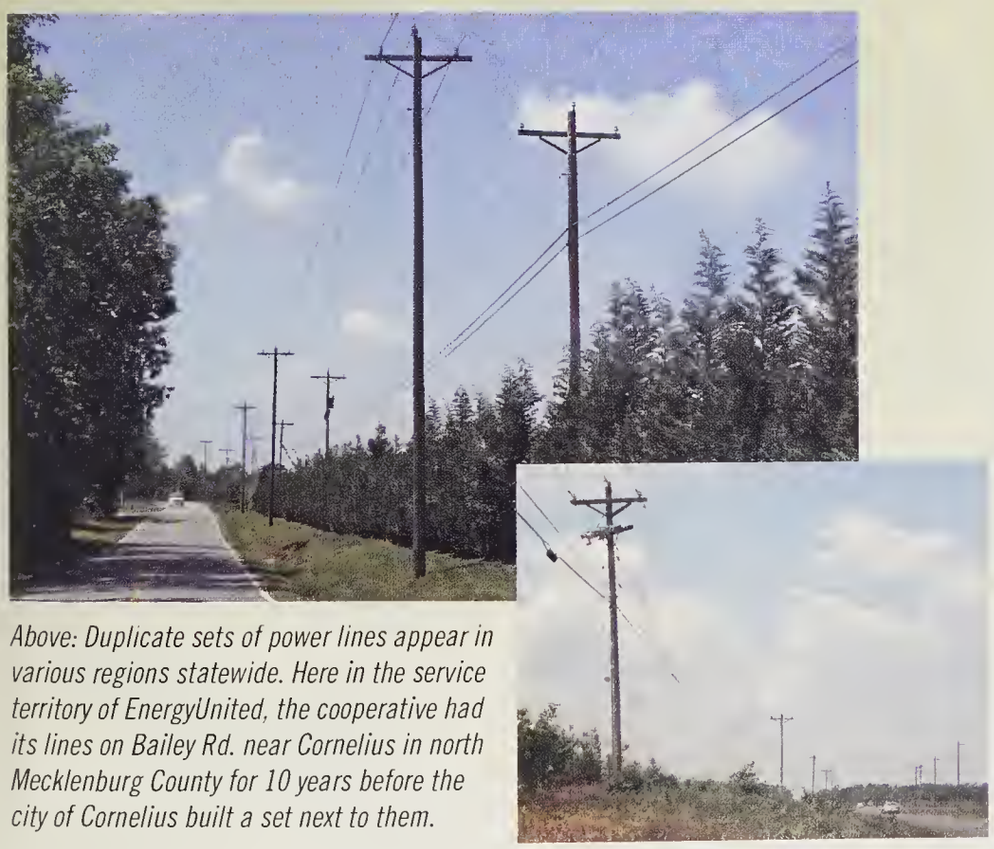


Above: Duplicate sets of power lines appear in various regions statewide. Here in the service territory of EnergyUnited, the cooperative had its lines on Bailey Rd. near Cornelius in north Mecklenburg County for 10 years before the city of Cornelius built a set next to them.

Right: Union Power Cooperative had its power lines in place on the left of Goldmine Rd. nearly 60 years before the city of Monroe built a set on the other side of the road.

A Guide to Electric Utilities

More than 100 separately organized electric utilities serve North Carolina's consumers. Depending on where you live or work, you could receive electric service from a consumer-owned cooperative, an investor-owned utility, your city government, or some other utility operating in the state. Each covers a designated area.

In the early days of electrification, power generally was available only in larger communities, where power companies could be assured of an economic return. In the 1930s and '40s, rural residents formed electric cooperatives that they could own and manage themselves to bring electricity to more sparsely populated regions.

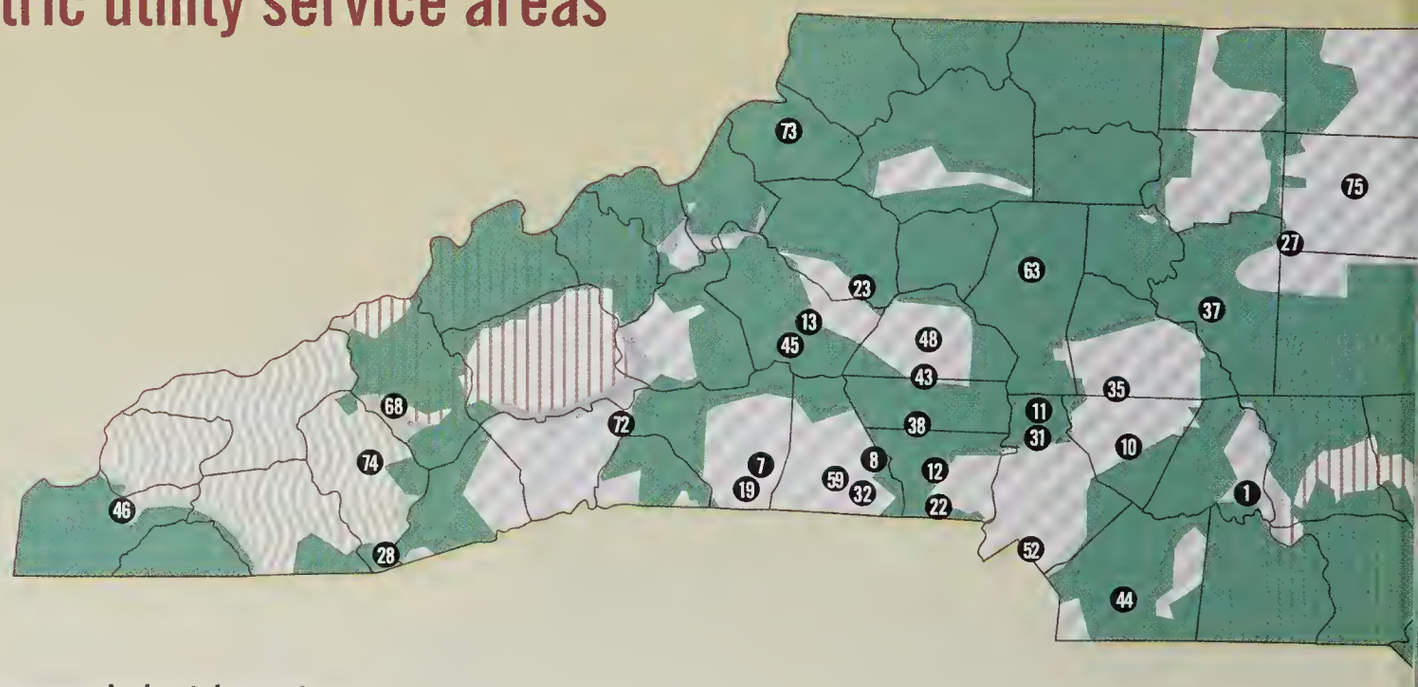
After World War II, growth in North Carolina's towns and cities began spilling over into these formerly rural areas. In 1965, the North Carolina Utilities Commission (an agency of state government formed in 1891) brought together investor-owned utilities and cooperatives in order to define and assign service areas. This division of service areas still stands today, although with some modifications.

The North Carolina Utilities Commission has jurisdiction over the licensing of new generating plants operated by all electric utilities and over the construction of new electric transmission facilities that are 161 kilovolts and above in size. Investor-owned utilities operate within the jurisdiction of the commission, which oversees their rates and service practices. Cooperatives and municipal electric systems are regulated by their own local governing bodies.

Cooperatives pay all the taxes that investor-owned utilities pay, except income tax, because cooperatives are not-for-profit organizations.

The North Carolina Rural Electrification Authority, whose five members are appointed by the governor, reviews the cooperatives' federal loan applications and consumer comments.

Electric utility service areas



Publicly-owned electric systems

1. Albemarle
2. Apex
3. Ayden
4. Belhaven
5. Benson
6. Black Creek
7. Bostic
8. Cherryville
9. Clayton
10. Concord
11. Cornelius
12. Dallas
13. Drexel
14. Edenton
15. Elizabeth City
16. Enfield
17. Farmville
18. Fayetteville
19. Forest City
20. Fountain
21. Fremont
22. Gastonia
23. Granite Falls
24. Greenville
25. Hamilton
26. Hertford
27. High Point
28. Highlands
29. Hobgood
30. Hookerton
31. Huntersville
32. Kings Mountain
33. Kinston
34. LaGrange
35. Landis
36. Laurinburg
37. Lexington
38. Lincolnton
39. Louisburg
40. Lucama
41. Lumberton
42. Macclesfield
43. Maiden
44. Monroe
45. Morganton
46. Murphy
47. New Bern
48. Newton
49. Oak City
50. Pikeville
51. Pinetops
52. Pineville
53. Red Springs
54. Robersonville
55. Rocky Mount
56. Scotland Neck
57. Selma
58. Sharpsburg
59. Shelby
60. Smithfield
61. Southport
62. Stantonsburg
63. Statesville
64. Tarboro
65. Wake Forest
66. Walstonburg
67. Washington
68. Waynesville
69. Wilson
70. Windsor
71. Winterville
72. Lake Lure *generates power for Progress Energy.*
73. New River Light & Power *serves Appalachian State University and the city of Boone.*
74. Western Carolina University *serves the university.*
75. UNC-Greensboro *serves the university.*
76. UNC-Chapel Hill *serves the university.*
77. East Carolina University *serves the university.*
78. Elizabeth City State University *serves the university.*

in North Carolina

Investor-owned electric utilities

Progress Energy

- Headquartered in Raleigh.
- Serves approximately 1.14 million North Carolina accounts.
- Generates electric power at 38 different plants in the Southeast.

Duke Power

- Headquartered in Charlotte.
- Serves approximately 1.5 million North Carolina accounts.
- Generates electric power at 27 different plants.

Duke Power—Nantahala Area

- Headquartered in Franklin.
- Formerly Nantahala Power & Light Company.
- Serves approximately 65,000 accounts.
- Generates electric power at 11 hydroelectric facilities.

Dominion

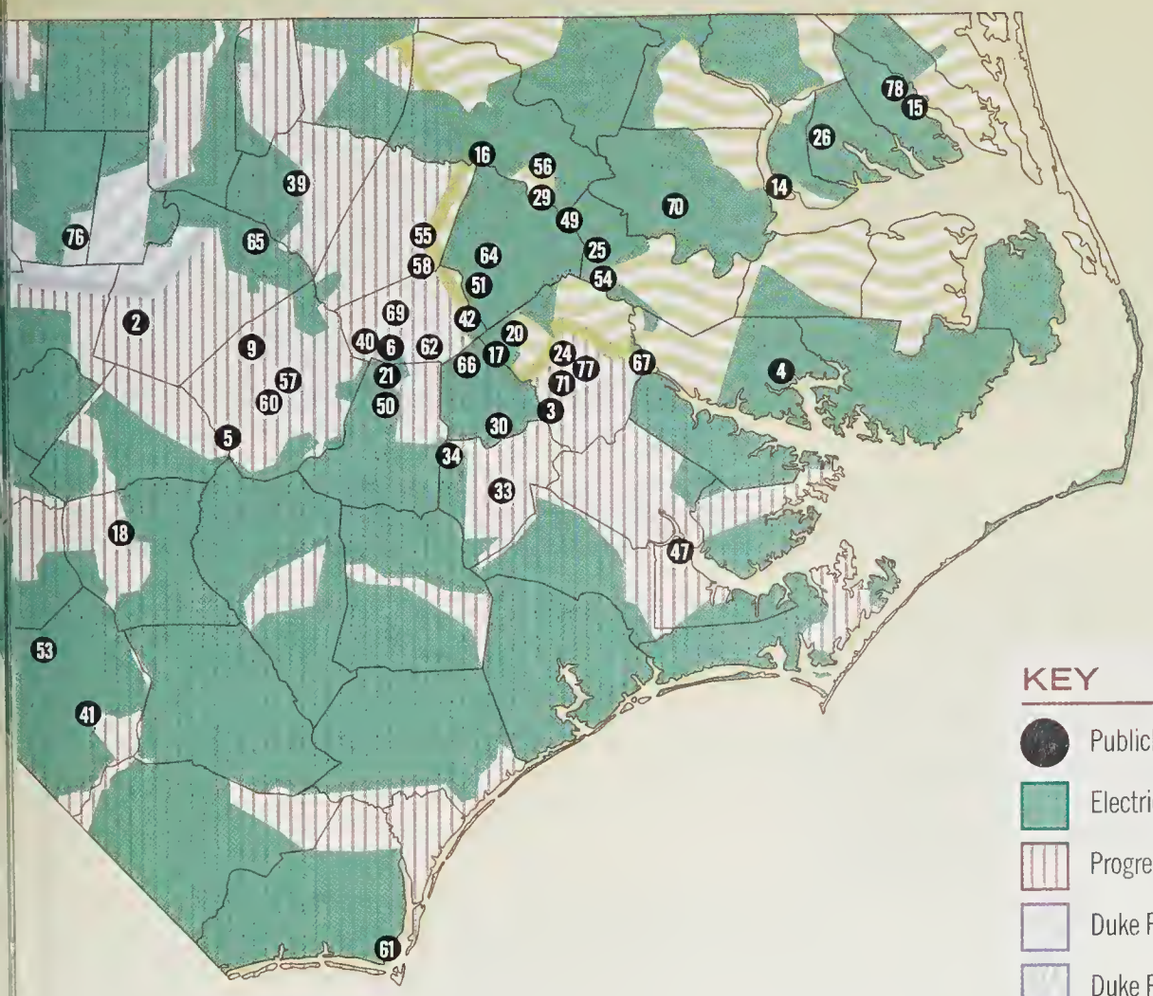
- Headquartered in Richmond.
- Operates in northeastern North Carolina as Dominion North Carolina Power.
- Serves approximately 115,000 North Carolina accounts.
- Generates electric power at 15 different plants.

Electric cooperatives

- Owned and governed by their members.
- Approximately 880,000 North Carolina homes, farms and businesses served by cooperatives (also known as electric membership corporations or EMCs), approximately 2.4 million people.
- 5 co-ops based in Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia and South Carolina serve border areas in North Carolina.
- 27 co-ops headquartered in North Carolina.
- 26 co-ops belong to the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, a generation and transmission cooperative that supplies its members with power primarily purchased from other utilities. NCEMC is one of the largest buyers of wholesale electric power in the nation and also owns a partial interest in the Catawba Nuclear Station in York County, S.C. and two diesel-powered generating facilities in Buxton and Ocracoke.
- All 27 N.C. co-ops belong to the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, a service association that performs services statewide, including publishing Carolina Country magazine.

City governments

- 72 municipally owned electric systems serve approximately 500,000 North Carolina households and businesses.
- 66 of these systems are members of Electricities of North Carolina, an umbrella organization that manages two power agencies supplying wholesale electricity directly to 51 Electricities members and indirectly to another five members. These power agencies are North Carolina Municipal Power Agency Number 1, which has a partial interest in the Catawba Nuclear Station, and North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency, which has partial interests in CP&L's Mayo and Roxboro fossil steam plants and Brunswick and Harris nuclear plants.
- A portion of the electric power for these municipally owned systems is purchased wholesale from investor-owned utilities.



KEY

- Publicly-owned electric systems
- Electric cooperatives
- Progress Energy
- Duke Power
- Duke Power—Nantahala Area
- Dominion

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"That's the good part about electricity: As we wear out, it don't."

Remembering when the lights came on

In the mid-1980s, staff at the state's electric cooperatives interviewed members to record their memories of when their cooperative brought electric power to their communities. The project helped mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the federal Rural Electrification Administration, which encouraged people in the latter 1930s and 1940s to form cooperatives. The oral history project was conducted in conjunction with the North Carolina Humanities Committee and historian Lu Ann Jones. The North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives collected the recordings and published some in a book, "Living History." Here are excerpts from the collection, with photos from the REA archives.

BEFORE THE POWER CAME

"It Made Us Want Electricity"

The towns had lights. We were used to electricity when we'd go to town. Had kin people in town. When you'd go down there and see they had electricity and a bathroom and we didn't, it made us want electricity even more.

Gerald Whitehurst / Straits

We had electricity up until sundown. Had it during the day. When sundown came, why, they turned it off. It was a private operation. The man had a steam motor and he generated electricity, but he'd turn it off at sundown.

Douglas Robinson / Mars Hill

There were no modern conveniences. Read by kerosene lamp, washed on a washboard, heated water drawn from a well in a big iron pot, cooked on a wood stove, heated irons on the wood stove and walked 20 miles back and forth from the stove to the ironing board to do a week's ironing. Took a bath in a wash pan. Had an outdoor privy. If you wanted to have ice tea in the summer, you walked some miles to the store to get a piece of ice and when you hot home half of it had melted. At night you used a chamber pot and had to carry it out in the morning no matter what the weather.

Edythe Hollowell Jones / Tarboro

To have beef back then you would have to cook it right straight. And chicken—if you would kill it for Sunday, you would have to salt it and hang it up under the eaves, because it was cooler outside.

Katie McGehee / Sanford

We'd go into Turkey and get a mess of fish on Saturday morning. We had to eat 'em that same day. They were better at dinner than they were at supper.

Henry P. Lucas / Turkey

I remember our neighbor having electricity. We'd just go out at night and look at their lights.

Dema Reeves Lyall / Nathans Creek

You can imagine six, seven kids trying to crowd around a lamp to see. Or else we sat in front of the fireplace and did our homework.

Shirley Collier / Hope Mills

That's the reason I got these crooked fingers. See? Both of them's crooked. Milking cows by hand.

Henry P. Lucas / Turkey

HERE IT COMES
"I've Never Heard Such Hollering"

It created a lot of excitement. Children in the neighborhood came out to watch the construction of the lines. Their dads were glad to help out in anyway. In one particular instance I recall I took my own team of horses and pulled line through the Lumber River swamp because the cooperative did not have equipment at that time to go over these rough places. And when we got to the river with the lines, then the neighbors got together with the construction crew and pulled the lines by hand across the river. Swam the river and pulled the lines across.

Hubert Prevatte / Pembroke

You'd suggest to a farmer that you're going to put some poles down in his field. The first thing he says, "I don't want to plow around 'em." If I could see a persimmon tree in that field, I'd point at it and say, "Well you're plowing around this persimmon tree and it's got roots out in your way, and you're not getting anything out of that persimmon tree. Why not plow around a pole that's giving you and your neighbors service?" You'd be surprised how many people would sign up just on that one argument.

Al Wall / Asheboro

One Saturday, I took about four men to pull the wire to one house. A bunch of their people had come in from Florida—must have been ten or twelve of them there that night. When we turned that power on, they had everything hooked up in the house, and she flashed up! I've never heard such hollering and laughing in this world. You know we had to come in and eat supper with 'em. They had the derndest supper you ever seen. They were the proudest of any people I ever seen in my life.

Pat Patterson / Highlands

The only thing that bothered me was how that current came in. How did you measure it? I couldn't see how it was going to come out of the wire outside and into a home and you could do something with it.

John Godwin / Pembroke

WHEN THE LIGHTS WENT ON
"Thank the Lord"

We just felt so good and rejoiceful that we thanked the Lord for it.

Sam Oswalt / Iredell County

Some of 'em were even afraid of electricity. Some felt that the juice was in the wire, and if you did not have a light bulb in every socket, electricity would leak out and it would run your bill up.

Quinton Hussey / Asheboro

After electricity came, my aunt had a radio. She was a real religious person, and she thought it was a sin to listen to anything on it except preaching or gospel music. So if you ever did get it, you had to sneak some place and just turn it on real quick and listen until you thought she was coming. Then you'd cut it off, put it back, and run!

Shirley Collier / Hope Mills

I remember Grandma ironing with her first electric iron. She'd plug in her iron and let it get good and hot. Test it to see if it was hot enough. Then she'd pull the plug out of the wall and iron as fast as she could! She'd unplug it, iron until it got too cold, then she'd plug it back in again and let it reheat.

Mary Dryman / Highlands

The older we get, seems like the more help electricity is to us. That's the good part about electricity: As we wear out, it don't.

Yates Abernathy / Vale

"I was big—now I'm not!"

"It's just an easy, breezy program!"

One morning Tammy couldn't get out of bed. Having ballooned to 260 lbs., she just didn't have the energy. It was then she realized she had to make a change or lose the most important fight of her life. "That day," the now perky girl from Kankakee, Illinois, bubbled, "I realized I wasn't living at all. I finally said enough is enough. I eventually lost 125 lbs.* and got my life back, thanks to a no-brainer plan from NutriSystem®."

That morning, I talked to my fiancé about wanting to lose weight—we had those conversations a lot. I talked the talk, but never walked the walk. I had become a lifeless blob and was terribly unhappy with myself. I couldn't imagine how anyone else could be happy with me, either. Finally, I went over to the mirror, and said, "I've had enough!" So I started NutriSystem® and in less than a year, I lost 125 lbs.*!

"Right away I thought, *'This is too easy!'*"

I chose NutriSystem because it was the only program that literally did all of the work for me. They delivered all the meals and desserts right to my door, and even gave me a weight loss counselor I could call whenever I had any questions or was just having a bad day. I didn't have time to go all the way across town to weigh-in in front of a whole bunch of people. (*Heck, I hardly have time to get to the grocery store!)* With NutriSystem everything came to me. It's SO convenient.

"Yes, I ate my favorite, rotini and meatballs, and still lost 125 lbs.*!"

"I ate 5 meals every day—even dessert!"

I'd been on a ton of diets. But this was the first one that let me eat five times a day! And if you think I was eating "rabbit food," boy, are you wrong! I was eating pancakes with maple syrup! Hamburgers! Pasta! Pot roast! Even chocolate cake! What diet ever lets you eat all that?

"And wow! The weight kept coming off."

Every NutriSystem meal was perfectly portioned, so I couldn't screw up by eating too many calories. Plus! I never had to think about what I was going to cook for breakfast, lunch or dinner. All I had to do was choose an entrée *(they have over 120, you know)* and it took just minutes to make one. And voilà! I had a delicious gourmet meal that I could eat at the same time as my fiancé. I loved being able to having dinner with him.

"NutriSystem took the work out of weight loss."

Look. There's just no simpler plan than NutriSystem. *(Losing weight is hard enough—you don't need anything else complicating it.)* And you don't have to pay any money to join NutriSystem, either. You only pay for the great-tasting food you eat *(the rotini and meatballs are my favorite!).* Better yet! I never had to go to meetings or gorge myself on just meats (*how boring is that after a few months?)*. It was so nice not having to count points, calories, or carbs. And I didn't have to weigh or measure anything. It's a no-brainer plan! And if you busy moms out there don't think you have time to fit a weight loss program into your day, think again. NutriSystem is the program for you!

"I feel happy, healthy...and yes, even SEXY!"

Why did I succeed on NutriSystem? Well, because it was SO easy! Like my friends and family know, I'm living proof of how well it works. I was big—now I'm not! Here I am—125 lbs.* lighter! For the first time ever, I can see my collarbone, feel my hips, and wear a two-piece bathing suit out in public. *(You just don't know what that can do to a woman's self-esteem!)* Thanks to NutriSystem, I'm a new person and I love the new life I lead. Now, I'm not just "alive," but I'm living life to the fullest!

nutrisystem®

Tammy LOST 125 LBS.*

*Weight lost on prior NutriSystem program. Results not typical.

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We Made History

Your family contributions to the great state of North Carolina

Your accounts of making North Carolina history are truly inspiring. Monumental or momentary, our citizens' contributions to our communities, our state and our country are powerful and plentiful. Thank you to everyone who proudly shared their stories. You can see more at our Web site. Next month we'll publish your explanations of "Why I'm a Gardener." (Deadline was Jan. 15.) See more themes and rules of our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series on page 24.

The Hollering Champion

My dad, Paul Thomas Kendall, was a historical figure in North Carolina. He was born in 1911 in Stedman. By the time he was only 11 years old he was providing a living for his widowed mother and his sister with his own cows, chickens, garden and bee yard. He ran a newspaper route in the mornings and swept stores in the evenings. In his spare time he climbed church steeples in Fayetteville, catching pigeons to sell.

When I was a kid in the 1960s in Whiteville, Dad had a thousand hives of bees, a Perma-Stone construction business, and he was already famous for his backhoe operating skills in the bays and swamps of Bladen and Columbus counties. Yet, he still had time to start a 100-acre blueberry farm for a hobby!

Dad's greatest achievement came in 1983 when he won the World's Hollering Contest. On Nov. 11, he appeared on the "Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson. In front of 6 million viewers he performed the best of Carolina hog calling, dove calls, barnyard critter imitations, gospel melody hollering and just plain old hollering, too.

The impact he made on North Carolina was to serve as one of the best examples of the kind of rugged individualism that put this great state together.

Michael Kendall, Kelly / Four County EMC

The East Surry Little League Girls

During the summer of 2003, 12 girls from the East Surry Little League ventured on a quest to win the World Series. My daughter, Rachael Brooks, was on the team as centerfielder. The journey was nearing its end in Jeffersontown, Ky. East Surry Little League represented the South. Through grueling heat and dirt, the team won their way to the final game. They were up against a tough team from Jeffersontown but they conquered and won. The final score was 8–4.

The girls replaced the previous winner's flag waving in centerfield with a North Carolina flag. What a proud

moment. The East Surry Little League team put Pilot Mountain on the map by becoming the first girl's Senior League team from North Carolina to win the World Series. This is a mark in North Carolina history that I will never forget.

Karla Thompson, Ararat / Surry-Yadkin EMC

UNC-Chapel Hill's First Donor

Someone in my family who made history was Edmond Jones (ca. 1750-1854). He was born in Granville County, which later became part of Orange County and at his death was Chatham County.

He served in the Revolutionary Army and was married to Rachel Alston. He and nine other men gave land so that the nation's first state university could be established. Back in 1784, he deeded 200 acres of land (plus some lumber) to establish the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill which was organized in 1789.

Through my great-great-great-great-grandfather's gift, thousands of Carolina students, including myself, have benefited from an education in "Carolina Country." My son Grayson and my daughter Arden, who is posing at the Old Well at springtime (above), hopefully will carry on the family tradition.

Janelle Lambert Tally, Goldston | Randolph EMC

The True Medic

At the beginning of the Korean conflict, my mama's cousin felt it was his duty to join the Army to help. His biggest problem was that he couldn't see himself hurting another human being. He explained this to a recruiter who convinced him to go in as a medic. He followed the advice, joined the Army and entered Korea as part of a unit based out of Fort Bragg.

On March 12, 1952, near Sokso-Ri, Korea, he was the only medic assigned to a night combat unit which came under enemy fire. He was injured himself but refused help and instead kept helping other injured soldiers—even after another injury took his right arm. After collapsing from loss of blood, he kept giving aid to other soldiers by telling others what to do. He died soon after.

He was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. They dedicated the hospital at Fort Bragg to him then later named the replacement hospital for him also. His name was Bryant Homer Womack from Mill Springs. We have had several other family members serve in the military, but I suppose that Bryant was our most famous.

Noel B. Sisk, Rutherfordton | Rutherford EMC

The Marbles Champion

My dad, Don Moore, made North Carolina history when he became the marbles champion of Hillcrest School in Burlington. The school went through the eighth grade, and he seems to remember being around 12 or 14 years old. Dad can't remember the final outcome of the city tournament, but he does remember going on to a state tournament in Raleigh. He also remembers how his dad reacted (my grandfather) after they played a "fun" game and his dad beat him. He said he never let him forget it.

Donna Hill, Elon | Piedmont EMC

The Mountain Climber

Climb every mountain … or at least 50 of them. With the love and support of my family, I set out to reach the highest geographical point in each of the 50 United States. At first it was easy. North Carolina's Mt. Mitchell has a road to the top. So does Tennessee's Clingman's Dome. Florida's highest "mountain," the nation's lowest summit (345 feet) is a sandy knoll topped with picnic tables and restrooms. Delaware's highest point is found at a suburban intersection.

West of the Mississippi, however, it gets harder. Texas' Guadalupe Peak soars to 8,749 feet and requires a 9-mile hike. Colorado's Mt. Elbert tops out above 14,000 feet and is reached by a long steep trail. Some climbs require roping together with others for safety, walking across ice using metal prongs (crampons) strapped to boots for traction, scrambling up rocky cliffs or sleeping atop frozen glaciers.

In 2003, I attempted Mt. McKinley, Alaska's—and our nation's—loftiest peak. The expedition took three weeks, but on June 12 I reached the 20,320-foot-high mountaintop, completing my quest to reach each state summit and becoming the first, and thus far only, North Carolinian to accomplish this feat.

Douglas Butler, Crumpler | Blue Ridge EMC

The Devoted Colonel

My great grandfather, Col. John H. Alley, participated in several events in the 19th Century that helped shape the history of North Carolina. In 1836, as colonel of the 113th Regiment of the N.C. Militia, he was assigned to the command of Gen. Winfield Scott during the removal of the Cherokee Indians from western North Carolina to the plains of Oklahoma, a duty he took no pride in. He served with Gen. Scott again in our war with Mexico in 1846. After recruiting and training a company of troops from Rutherford County, he led them on horseback to Texas, where he was commissioned colonel in the U.S. Army at the famous battle of Chapultepec.

In 1861, at the age of 47, he served one year in the War Between the States. Upon sustaining a severe wound to his leg, he was declared unfit for further action and was discharged from the Confederate Army. Gov. Zebulon Vance then appointed him head of the new office of Home Guard for Jackson County, where he served throughout the remainder of the war.

Along with his other accomplishments he fathered 10 children, one of whom later became Superior Court judge of Haywood County.

Howard E. Alley, Jackson County | Haywood EMC

The Vietnam War Hero

This is a very difficult story for me to tell because it is about my dad. His name is Daniel Lee Dawes Sr. He was from Sharpsbury, and he is a part of North Carolina history.

I only remember a few things about my dad because he was always gone. When I was 7 years old, I saw two soldiers on the front porch and I thought maybe one of them was my dad. But the soldiers said that my dad had died in combat in Vietnam on July 9, 1968.

My dad is a hero to me, my son and my grandson. When I show my 5-year-old grandson the few pictures and medals I have of my dad he says to me, "I miss your daddy." Yes, you can miss someone that you never really knew.

Cynthia Marie Dawes, Roanoke Rapids / Roanoke EMC

The New River Admiral

In the early 1960s, Appalachian Power Company, a subsidiary of American Electric Power Company, proposed to construct two hydroelectric dams in order to meet demand.

These dams would impound water that would cover 40,000 acres, but the power produced would not add to total electrical production. It would be a pumped-storage type to be used during peak-use times or emergencies. Producing three kilowatts would require four kilowatts to pump the water upstream.

Many of us made speeches, wrote letters and lobbied the U.S. Congress. And one of the nation's largest producers of electric power was defeated by a small group of vociferous citizens.

A member of this group, I was invited to the White House by President Ford for the signing of the bill that saved the world's second oldest river. Gov. Holshouser promoted me to "admiral" in the New River Navy.

Later, President Clinton visited Ashe County to proclaim the New River an American Heritage River.

Betty Thomas Plummer, Grassy Creek / Blue Ridge Electric

The Pender County Twins

Lorena

Melvena

Lorena and Melvena Jordan were the first twins born in Pender Memorial Hospital in Burgaw on Feb. 29, 1952. The daughters of Molissa B. Jordan of Burgaw, and the late Hertsel L. Jordan, their uncle, the late William Jordan, named them for twins in his class. As adults, Lorena and Melvena met their uncle's classmates and their namesakes, who lived in the Atkinson area of Pender County and were known as Big Sis and Little Sis.

Melvena and Lorena have two older siblings, James and Alice. Currently, the twins live and teach in Atlanta, Ga.

Alice J. Smith, Burgaw / Four County EMC

The Master of Harlowe

My father, George W. Ball, was born in the Merrimon community of Carteret County on July 4, 1891. His parents were Robert Bernie and Mary Elizabeth Ball. He made his first trip to Harlowe in 1908. In 1917, he moved to the area.

Mr. Ball and his brother Raymond built one of the most successful farming operations in eastern North Carolina. He was awarded the Master Farmer certificate in 1936, and he was also a Master Mason.

Mr. Ball was one of the original incorporators of Carteret-Craven Electric Membership Corporation. He served as an officer and director from the beginning. In 1953, Mr. Ball was elected president of the corporation—a position he held until his death.

In the 1940s, the Harlowe community undertook a project of remodeling the church. He supervised the construction during the four-year period and presented the additions for dedication.

George Ball passed away on June 1, 1969. He will be remembered as a true friend and a diligent supporter of the Harlowe community and church.

William Ball, Morehead City / Carteret-Craven EC

Send us your best

Earn $50

Here are the themes in our **"Nothing Could Be Finer"** series. Send us your stories and pictures about these themes. If yours is chosen for publication, we'll send you $50. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

April 2006
A Perfect Site for a Picnic
Send us your pictures and stories about the best picnic place in North Carolina.
Deadline: Feb. 15

May 2006
The Ugliest Lamp I Ever Saw
Send us the pictures.
Deadline: March 15

June 2006
The Best Summer I Ever Had
By kids age 16 and younger.
Deadline: April 15

July 2006
"I'll Never Eat That Again"
A bad experience with food.
Deadline: May 15

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. One entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos must be 300 dpi and actual size.
4. E-mailed or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay $50 for each submission published. We retain reprint rights.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)
9. Send to: Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616
   Or by e-mail: finer@carolinacountry.com
   Or through the Web: www.carolinacountry.com

CAROLINA COUNTRY REFLECTIONS

Winter Scenes

In the late 1940s, my husband, David Brinkley Jr. of Ahoskie, worked as an appliance service man for Farmers Hardware Company in Ahoskie. He is standing here in 1948 beside his service truck filled with all the repair parts he would need.

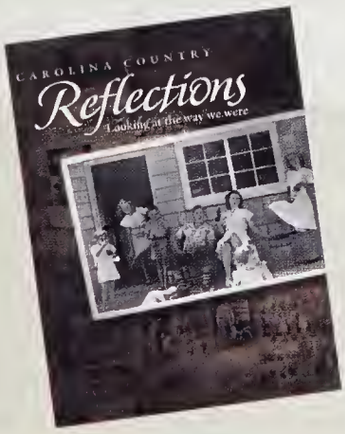
Margaret Brinkley, Ahoskie

You don't see icicles like this hanging off roofs or awnings much anymore! I guess that today's gutters serve a good purpose, but I miss seeing those ice formations hanging halfway down the side of our house. My brother Kent and I broke these beauties off our house in Yadkinville in February 1960 and our mama, Marie Harris, got out the old Brownie camera.

Vickie Shelton, Yadkinville

I'm not sure about the year here but back then we didn't get many snows. Kids in our family built the igloo and my mother, Vonnie Mae Everett, was happy to pose in front of our masterpiece.

Audrey Mason, Bath



Return to a simpler time. When folks cherished family, home cookin' and a long sip of sweet tea on mama's front porch. Enjoy "**Carolina Country Reflections**," a book of nearly 200 photographs showing life in rural North Carolina before 1970. Treasured photos and memories reveal scenes of families, farms, working, gatherings, fun times and everyday life.

This is a limited edition printing of a high-quality, hardcover "coffee table book," measuring 8½ x 11 inches with 160 pages. The price is $52 ($42.95 plus $6.05 shipping and $3.00 sales tax).

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Be Active North Carolina program promotes healthy lifestyles

Need additional motivation to work off holiday pounds? Sign up for the Be Active Challenge, a statewide program that encourages North Carolinians to develop healthy and active lifestyles. Last year, the inaugural program exceeded goals with more than 1,300 participants, 190 teams and a total of nearly 4.4 million minutes exercised.

This year, the Be Active Challenge runs from March 6–June 16.

How does it work?

North Carolinians can sign up to participate in teams of 2–10 people. These teams then engage in friendly competition to monitor time spent doing physical activities. Almost any form of movement counts—from walking and grocery shopping to lifting weights and gardening. Each team's goal is to log the greatest number of total team minutes. For the challenge as a whole, the cumulative goal is to record six million minutes statewide before the deadline.

Are awards given out?

Participants receive weekly e-mail health and exercise tips, recipes and a Be Active Challenge T-shirt for motivation along the way to improved, healthier lifestyles. Weekly contests offer additional motivation with prizes such as discount coupons, gift certificates and fitness accessories. Be Active Challenge leader boards will be posted weekly at beactivechallenge.org so that participants can track their physical activity and success.

How do I get started?

Form a team, select a captain, and resolve to improve your health by increasing your regular physical activity. Registration runs from January 3 through March 6. Captains can enter their teams in the challenge by downloading a form at http://ncsports.org/luncsub.php?m3

How much does it cost to participate?

The registration fee is $10 per person. The team captain can send a check or money order in with the registration information.

Why "Be Active?"

Inactivity and poor nutrition are having a disastrous impact on the health of North Carolinians. During the last decade, North Carolina has experienced one of the fastest-growing rates of adult obesity in the nation. More than half of all adult North Carolinians (59 percent) are overweight or obese.

- Many of the leading causes of death across the state are attributed to chronic diseases, which are preventable and directly related to lifestyle factors, such as physical activity and nutrition.
- Obesity is second only to tobacco use as the nation's leading cause of preventable death.
- The U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health states that people who are physically active manage stress better, sleep better and generally feel better. Other benefits of physical activity may include more energy, healthy weight control and reduced risk for many diseases.

"In our fast-paced lives, the Be Active Challenge is an innovative way of incorporating exercise and healthy lifestyle into our daily routines," said Chuck Hobgood, president of NCAS. "We're excited about building the program in 2006."

The Be Active Challenge is organized by North Carolina Amateur Sports (NCAS) in partnership with Be Active North Carolina. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina serves as presenting sponsor. Other contributing sponsors and partners include McDonald's, REI outdoor stores and Brand Fuel Promotions.

All-in-one devices do it all

The wonders of digital convergence

Digital convergence is the merging of different computer-aided technologies to create something new, and hopefully useful. After an agonizingly long courtship, TVs are finally marrying PCs, PCs are finally marrying telephones, telephones are finally marrying cameras, and cameras are finally marrying music players. Plus you'll find lots of healthy melting-pot melding among these and other technologies as well.

The wacky convergence devices of last decade, such as the combination refrigerator and Internet access device, may not have been embraced by the American consumer, but Apple Inc.'s iPod (www.apple.com/ipod) today is a bona fide craze.

The top-of-the-line iPod can not only pipe out your choice of thousands of downloaded songs, it can also play video, display photos, and prompt you with your schedule, to-do list, and address book—all from the palm of your hand.

Expect to pay to be on the cutting edge. A 60-gigabyte iPod costs $399 plus $.99 per downloaded song through Apple's iTunes music download store, meaning that listening to one new song a day this way costs about $760 over the first year.

Another convergence technology that has become mainstream is using your cable or DSL Internet connection to make long-distance telephone calls. Unlike in the past, you can use a phone to connect to a phone, rather than having to use your computer.

Vonage (www.vonage.com) is the biggest player in the industry, in no small part because of its omnipresent, and catchy, TV commercials. If you're a heavy long-distance caller on a budget, its $24.99 per month plan can be a good deal. Unlike some other VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) companies, it has nearly every area code in the U.S. covered, and the monthly fee includes not only unlimited minutes but also caller ID, call blocking and E-911 calls.

Quality for the most part is equal or nearly equal to landline long distance, though customer service has been spotty for some.

Despite its arrival, convergence, like digital technology in general, is still about the future, and the Consumer Electronics Show (www.cesweb.org), which recently took place in Las Vegas, offered a peek into it.

Among the hot product categories were cell phones equipped with cameras, music players, and video; laptop computers with integrated cell phone capabilities; PC gaming on big-screen TVs; and home theater systems with iPod compatibility.

Two of the more interesting convergence products introduced at the show were:

* The F9200 from LG Electronics U.S.A. (www.lge.com), which combines a cell phone, portable e-mail and instant-messaging device, slide-out typing keyboard, digital camera, music player and speakerphone.

* The LAP-9100 from Cyberhome (www.cyberhome.com), which is a portable entertainment center that includes an LCD display, DVD player, TV, AM/FM clock radio, digital audio player and still photo viewer.

Convergence involves more than just hardware. Taking their cue from "edutainment" companies such as Knowledge Adventure Inc. with its JumpStart software (www.jumpstart.com) that puts an entertainment sheen on education, Internet advertising companies are rolling out "advertainment."

Expect to see more interactive Web ads that include games you can play and dramatic TV and radio commercials that entice you onto the Web for more. Advertainment hopes to succeed by going beyond advertorials and informercials with fun or gripping human interest.

As a result of the success of AOL's coverage of Live 8, Shlain also expects to see TV networks such as MTV and Comedy Central roll out a lot of original, high-quality programming...for your broadband PC.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway. He can be reached at reidgold@netaxs.com or http://www.netaxs.com/~reidgold/column.

North Carolina's Preserve America Communities

Hatteras Village and Ocracoke

By Jennifer Taylor

Some of the most haunting and exciting stories come from the Outer Banks. The tales include legends of pirates, shipwrecks, hurricanes, fishing and lighthouses. Other stories that are not as well known include battles from the Civil War and the forts built on Hatteras and Ocracoke Island to protect the inlets and waterways. Since the 1960s, tourism has progressively increased with vacationers looking for isolated island havens rich with wildlife, coastal activities and history.

Tourism on Ocracoke began when the ferry system was established in the 1940s. Even today, Ocracoke is only accessible by water or air. Home to the oldest lighthouse still in operation in North Carolina, vacationers are attracted to the historic British Cemetery, migratory birds, offshore fishing, stories of the dreaded pirate "Blackbeard," and war sites.

Fort Ocracoke was built during the Civil War over the original batteries constructed to protect the inlet during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The navy opened a base on Ocracoke during World War II to help protect merchant ships carrying critical war supplies from German U-boats that lurked menacingly offshore. Across the mainland are old observation towers that were built to spot planes and submarines. Due to the wars and hurricanes, over 1,000 shipwrecks lie off the coast of Ocracoke.

Since the influx of travelers, the economy of Ocracoke has significantly changed from maritime to a concentration on tourism and historic preservation. Using the island's heritage to attract visitors, Ocracoke is included in the Historic Albemarle Tour and is additionally recognized as a North Carolina Civil War Trail. In 1990, Ocracoke was listed on the National Registry of Historic Places and most recently has been named a Preserve America community. The community is served by the Tideland Electric cooperative.

Adjacent to Ocracoke is Hatteras Village located on the southernmost tip of Hatteras Island. Like Ocracoke, the economy evolved from a small fishing and shipping center to a major tourist destination. In December 1963, the Herbert C. Bonner Bridge was completed. Tourism steadily increased due to the appeal of big game fishing, waterfowl hunting and the Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Vacationers yearned for the quiet beaches unaware of the history that surrounded them.

The community realized that their historic heritage deserved identification. In 1999, over 100 historic resources were recognized in Hatteras Village, including historic vessels, infamous shipwrecks and two Civil War forts. New attractions to the village include the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum and a self-guided Hatteras Village tour.

Derived from the name given to the fierce waters at Diamond Shoals, the museum is home to maritime relics, history on Billy Mitchell and antiques donated from village locals that have survived years of true island heritage. The museum serves as a new historical tourist highlight for the village and is located beside the Hatteras-Ocracoke ferry dock.

Although tourism and offshore fishing abound as the primary economic force for Hatteras Village, the community is working to promote its historical assets and generate interest in the history behind the once small commercial fishing village. The village's ideal location and unpredictable water and weather have contributed to its history. Named a Preserve America community in June 2005, Hatteras Village is honored for its commitment to historic preservation. Its power is maintained by Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative.

The Preserve America Program

Established in 2003 by the Bush Administration, Preserve America is a White House initiative to support community efforts that preserve our nation's heritage through the preservation of cultural and natural assets. Preserve America consists of a variety of components that include presenting Preserve America Presidential awards and establishing educational outreach programs and a matching grant program.

So far, seven areas in North Carolina have been designated as Preserve America communities. They include: Thomasville, Gaston County, Gastonia, Kinston, Edenton, Ocracoke, and Hatteras Village. There are 295 designated communities in the nation. The distinction is based on the area's use of historical assets for economic development and community revitalization. It also indicates that the community is working to preserve and use its assets as "building blocks for the future." Gale Norton, U.S. Secretary of the Interior, stated, "Each community has its own story. These stories present opportunities—opportunities for heritage tourism, education, and historic preservation. Through Preserve America, these stories come alive."

For more information, visit www.preserveamerica.gov or call (202) 606-8503. The remaining communities recognized in North Carolina will be featured in upcoming months of Carolina Country magazine.

the Rising Cost of Doing Business

By Reed Karaim

Fuel prices and global competition are among the factors putting pressure on the cost of electricity.

While the price you pay for electricity these days has not risen as sharply as the prices you're paying for gasoline and fuel oil, most analysts agree that we could see several years of upward pressure on electric rates.

That's because a complicated set of factors—everything from increased demand for power to dramatic increases in fuel costs in the United States, to long-term economic growth in the Far East—seems to be conspiring to increase the cost of making and delivering electricity.

There are steps the power industry, the government and every consumer can take to help keep costs down. But a large part of the problem is simply that the U.S. faces a new era of increased global competition for limited energy and other resources.

"You can always find fault for things, if you want, but this is largely driven by global issues where you can't really blame anyone," says Roger Gale, CEO of GF Energy, a consulting firm that publishes the highly respected report "Electricity Outlook." "That's just the way it is. What we have to do is get used to it, and make it work for us."

Why higher fuel prices?

The new reality starts with much higher costs for natural gas, which makes it more costly not only to stay warm in the winter, but also more expensive for Americans in some regions of the country to keep the lights on. Natural gas is the fuel used to generate more than 17 percent of the electricity in the United States.

The U.S. government's Energy Information Administration estimates that will grow to 20 percent by 2010. Almost all of the new power plants built during the last decade in the United States burn natural gas to generate electricity. The reason is simple: when the plans for those plants were on the drawing board, natural gas was one of the great energy bargains, costing about $2 per million Btu as recently as 2002. That's just more than a half-penny per kilowatt-hour (kwh).

Also, the United States and Canada produced almost all the natural gas they used, so the supply seemed less dependent on the whims of world markets such as the oil market and, in particular, the ups and downs of Middle Eastern politics.

But in 2005, natural gas went as high as $14 per million Btu, or 4.8 cents per kwh. That was a spike, but analysts project that prices will stay at least in the $6 to $8 range (between 2 and 2.7 cents per kwh), an increase of as much as 400 percent over a few years.

The problem is the fuel that seemed to be a bargain was always subject to the basic laws of supply and demand. The United States and Canada now use all the natural gas they can pump out of the ground and more, leaving little slack in the system. In addition to the effects of supply and demand, natural gas is subject to price fluctuations because of speculation in the market.

"We've been living on this razor's edge where any change in supply, any change in

continued on page 30

A large part of **the problem** is simply that the U.S. faces a new era of increased global competition for ***limited energy*** and other resources.

demand—any significant weather event—makes a difference," says Chris McGill, managing director, policy analysis for the American Gas Association. "We had a summer this year that was 19 percent warmer than normal. That's a huge deviation. We had much more natural gas going to power generation. In the critical weeks of the summer cooling season, we were consuming up to 30 percent more."

And 2005's devastating hurricane season will dampen the outlook for oil and gas production well into 2006. In a tight market, that can send prices skyrocketing. Some consumers have already seen "fuel cost adjustments" added to their electricity bills.

The global picture

To make up for shortfalls in domestic supply, the United States has imported natural gas from both Canada and Mexico, as well as a small amount of liquefied natural gas, or LNG. Several nations that used to export natural gas —including the United Kingdom and China—have started importing as their needs have grown. Efforts are underway to expand LNG import capability on a dramatic scale, but competition has also increased for LNG.

Countries like India, China and Brazil are rapidly industrializing, and their needs are changing. World energy consumption is projected to increase by 57 percent from 2002 to 2025, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Worldwide electricity use is expected to grow even faster. It could nearly double in the next two decades alone, the agency projects in its study, "International Energy Outlook 2005."

Leading this charge is China, which recently announced another year of sharp economic growth above 9 percent. When David Mohre, executive director of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's energy and power division, toured China recently, he learned that one out of every five construction cranes currently in use is in the booming Shanghai region. The Chinese economic juggernaut, Mohre points out, means more competition for everything from oil to the steel and cement used to build U.S. power plants.

What we can do

Here in the United States, which still uses the most power of any nation in the world, the demand for electricity is growing more modestly. Rising natural gas costs here could be partially offset by an increased investment in nuclear or coal-fired plants and by increased conservation by consumers.

Indeed, that's one of the reasons it's so important for consumers to be aware of what's happening in the electricity markets, says Mohre. "If they know this is coming, they may choose to purchase a substantially more efficient air conditioner," he says. Even small steps like installing a programmable thermostat or changing to higher-efficiency fluorescent lighting can shave valuable dollars from an electricity bill.

In addition, more investment in energy sources here in the U.S.—new oil and gas wells, more nuclear power, solar and wind generation—can all help reduce dependence on world energy markets.

But another problem remains: The nation's high-voltage electricity transmission network needs some updating.

Many analysts agree that state and federal attempts to deregulate the electric industry contributed to the reluctance to invest in transmission. To complicate matters, power plant construction in the last two decades and new players in the power market have resulted in more than a 100-fold increase in activity on the transmission grid.

"Throughout the 1990s, there was a significant slowdown in investment in transmission," says Alan Beamon, director of the coal and electric power division of the U.S. Energy Information Administration. "Utilities are going to have to invest in updating their transmission as new generation comes on line."

Part of that new generation, according to Mohre, will come from electric cooperatives, which will have to invest heavily in new capacity over the next 10 years—some $28 billon worth.

The bottom line is, even with increased conservation and the pursuit of alternative sources of power, the price of electricity is still going up for many Americans. The Energy Information Administration's forecast shows energy costs falling back from the 2004 highs, but not to previous lows, and then increasing more slowly over several years.

For consumers the big question, of course, is, "how much are my rates going to go up?" The answer varies even by community, because the cost of generating and delivering power varies across the country. Power companies in some parts of Texas and California are requesting increases in the 14 to 17 percent range to cover fuel costs. A large utility in the Midwest has requested an 11 percent increase in its base rate, and in New England, one utility has proposed a 60 percent increase in industrial and commercial rates. In other areas of the nation, including the Southeast, increases are expected to be modest.

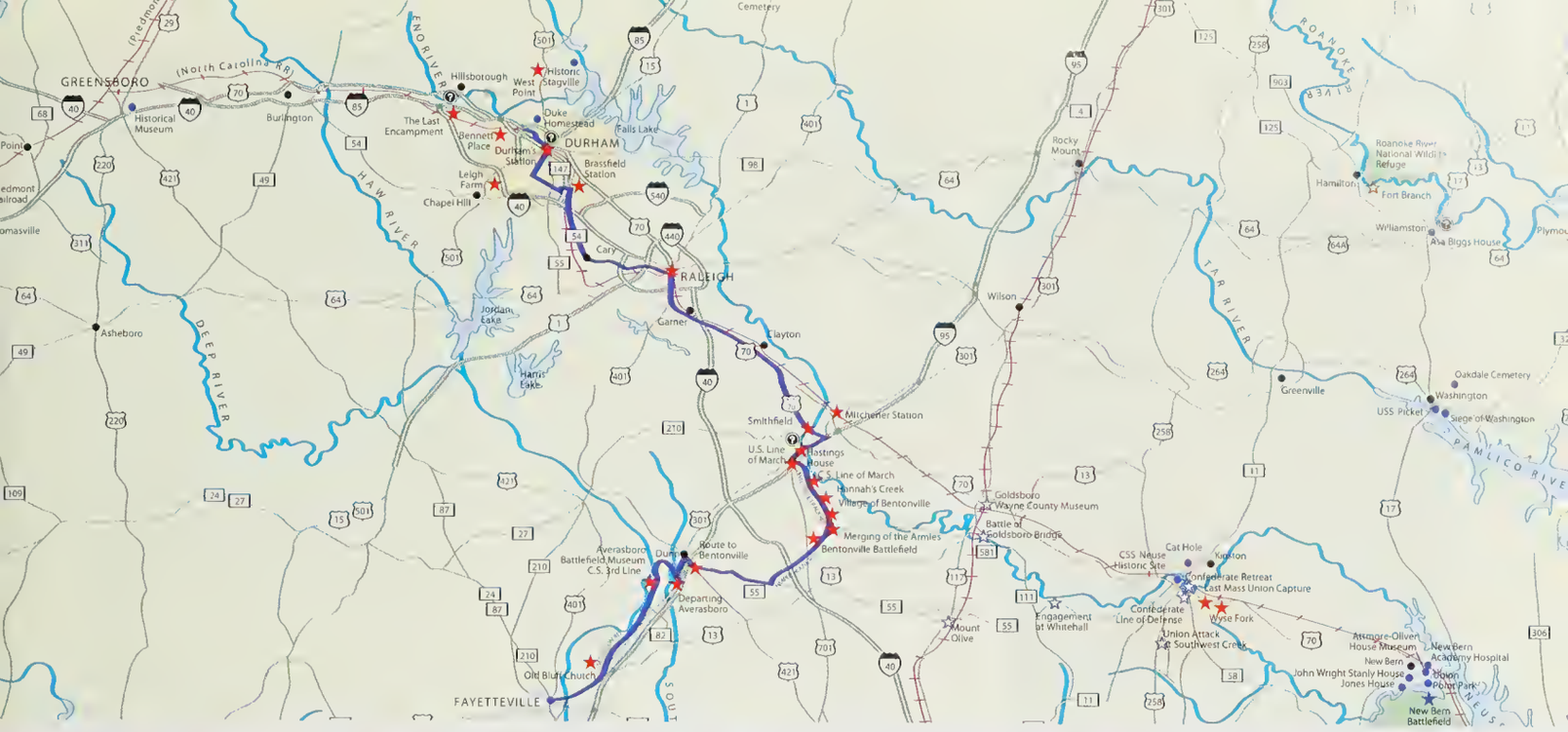
Luckily, the situation doesn't look as bad for co-op members as it does for many consumers. For one thing, much of the power used by the nation's electric cooperatives comes from coal-fired generating plants and in North Carolina's case from nuclear power (45 percent). The United States has plentiful amounts of coal, and the price is less susceptible to the sharp ups and downs of oil and natural gas.

The generation and transmission cooperatives that supply much of the power to the co-op network generally have access to federally guaranteed loans for construction projects. Most also are highly rated by Wall Street. This means they can raise money for needed improvements more affordably than many utilities.

Still, even cooperatives will not be able to escape completely all the nationwide pressure on electricity costs. Some co-ops will have to make adjustments in their rates to deal with the new reality of increased energy costs.

Electric cooperatives, however, hold one final advantage. They're owned by and run for the people they serve. Mohre puts it succinctly: "Co-ops are not for profit. They don't try to get the highest price from their members, but the lowest price for their members."

Reed Karaim wrote this article for the National Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives.



NORTH CAROLINA

Civil War Trails

Driving tour takes you to diverse sites throughout the state

By Renee Gannon

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Did the Battle Between the States end at Appomattox Courthouse in Virginia on April 9, 1865, with Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's surrender to U.S. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant? For all intent, yes. But the battle continued to rage south of that courthouse, in North Carolina. The fighting didn't cease in the Tar Heel state until Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnson surrendered to Union Gen. William T. Sherman at Bennett Place in Durham on April 26, 1865.

Bennett Place is just one of the stops on the North Carolina Civil War Trails driving tour. The first phase of what will become a statewide trail features more than 80 interpretive sites. It follows Sherman's 1865 Carolinas Campaign (officially from Fayetteville to Durham) and includes sites from the coast to the Piedmont. The trail can be driven in one to three days, depending on the visitor's interests.

Campaign trail sites also include Bentonville Battlefield (considered the South's Last Stand), Averasboro, Federal occupation of coastal areas, ironclads in Kinston and Plymouth, forts such as Fort Macon and Fort Fisher, blockade running on the southern coast, supply lines, hospitals and prisons, as well as houses, crossroads and fields that played a part in the war's waning days.

Re-live the Confederate's last offense at Bentonville Battleground in Johnson County and skirmishes fought in Hannah's Creek, Leigh Farm, Averasboro, South Mills and Wyse Fork. Follow Union Gen. John Foster's raids in his attempt to burn a Goldsboro bridge, and how Confederate Gen. Nathan Evans tried and failed to stop him, leading to the Federal occupation of Kinston. Visit museums in Wilmington and Raleigh, and in many towns in between, to learn more about the state's part in the war. Houses, hospitals and cemeteries, and the people who occupied these sites, all have a tale. Did you know that Annie Eliza Johns, considered the "Florence Nightingale of the South," is buried in Leaksville?

Some 125,000 Tar Heels fought in the war, more than from any state in the Confederacy. The state also led in the number of deaths: more than 40,000. Tar Heels left blood on every battlefield in every state in which the war was waged.

According to the N.C. Commerce Department's Division of Tourism, the next section of the driving tour will continue into the western Piedmont and mountain areas of North Carolina. The ongoing expansion of the trail will be complete within the next two years. Total goal for the entire trail is 200 sites, with 95 now marked. Another 150 locations have been identified for possible inclusion.

The Federal Highway Administration, state Department of Transportation, and state Department of Commerce are involved in the trails project. Similar trails and maps exist for Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, South Carolina, Maryland and Washington D.C.

We still don't know for sure where Abraham Lincoln was born

By Michael E.C. Gery

Carolina Country has earned the reputation for keeping lively the allegation that Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, was born in rural North Carolina. We see no good reason for stopping now.

Our loyal puzzle-master Charles G. Joyner started it all in a February article a few years ago when he recirculated the story first published in 1899 by James H. Cathey, himself a North Carolinian from Jackson County. Cathey's book, "The Genesis of Lincoln" (long since out of print, but still around in the rare books world), recounted several stories from people who were downright positive that Lincoln was born in about 1804 in rural Swain County.

There is no dispute that Abraham's mother was Nancy Hanks. The dispute lies in where Nancy Hanks was when Abraham was born, and just when that was, and just who the father was. Most historians, and Honest Abe himself, say he was born on Feb. 12, 1809, the son of Nancy Hanks and Thomas Lincoln of Hardin (now LaRue) County, Ky. North Carolina fans claim he was the illegitimate son of Abram Enloe, a gentleman farmer who moved his family and maidservant Nancy Hanks from Rutherford County to the Ocunaluftee area of today's Swain County while Nancy was pregnant with his child. Other North Carolina fans say Abram Enloe's wife banished the pregnant Miss Hanks from the Enloes' Swain County household, and the young women returned to the former Enloe stomping grounds in Rutherford County and delivered little Abe.

The North Carolina story has been told repeatedly over the past two centuries by Enloe family members, Honest Abe spotters and writers who cite interviews with reliable sources and hard-to-deny evidence, including photos of Abram Enloe's descendants who look an awful lot like Abraham Lincoln (the long and angular face, the lanky build, arms that hang almost to the knees).

Carolina Country's shameless resurrection of this dispute has attracted the attention of both sides.

Frank Young, of Macon County, N.C., and Dillard, Ga., not long ago published a book on the subject. It's called "Nancy Hanks, Single Mother of Abraham Lincoln" and is still in circulation (go online or contact Frank Young at P.O. Box 22, Dillard, Ga. 30537). Mr. Young says Miss Hanks gave birth to little Abraham, son of Mr. Enloe, on Puzzle Creek near Bostic in Rutherford County, and that a local African-American midwife helped with the delivery. The local historical society has placed a marker in the vicinity to memorialize the place where the future president may very well have been born.

As in other accounts, Mr. Young reports that Thomas Lincoln drove wagons for Abram Enloe and was employed by Mr. Enloe to carry Miss Hanks and her infant son out of state. This was, says Mr. Young, the idea of Mr. Enloe's wife, "so that he and Nancy could not romance again."

But Tom Lincoln and Nancy Hanks did romance and were married on June 12, 1806, according to records from Washington County, Ky. They are, in fact, the earliest known records of the president's mother. Unfortunately, no record comes later reporting that she gave birth to Abraham, nor whether she had a 2- or 3-year-old boy with her during her wedding.

A letter that Abe Lincoln wrote, published in the book "Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings 1832–1858," published by Library of America in 1989, includes this: "I was born Feb. 12th, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My father's name is Thomas; my grandfather's was Abraham, the same of my own. My grandfather went from Rockingham County in Virginia to Kentucky, about the year 1782; and, two years afterwards, was killed by Indians. . . Owing to my father being left an orphan at the age of six years, in poverty, and in a new country, he became a wholly uneducated man; which I suppose is the reason why I know so little of our family history."

When he says "father," we presume he's referring to Thomas Lincoln. Of all the material we've seen on this subject, none of it has anything nice to say about Thomas Lincoln, and some of it says he was a nasty, wife-beating drunk and child abuser.

Tom Melton of Rutherford County, who is related to Lincoln's nephew, says that Nancy Hanks was an illegitimate daughter of a local woman, Lucy Hanks, who was an itinerant spinner. He also mentions that Tom Lincoln was stocky and low-browed and not very smart, and that one of Mr. Enloe's legitimate sons, Wesley, looked a lot like the President.

J. Bruce Thorn of Stokesdale in Guilford County told us that when he worked with The Lincoln National Life Insurance Co. of Fort Wayne, Ind., the resident historian rejected the claim that Abraham Lincoln was born a Tar Heel. Mr. Thorn declined to accept that entirely and traveled with his son to visit the reconstructed Enloe farmstead in Swain County where everyone swore they were kin to Abraham Lincoln and many of them looked very much like they weren't lying.

Those who deny the future president was born here come up with so-called hard evidence that shows Thomas Lincoln was in Kentucky from 1786 to 1816 and nowhere near North Carolina, and that the North Carolina Nancy Hanks who knew Abram Enloe was a different Nancy Hanks than the one who was in Kentucky marrying Mr. Lincoln and giving birth to Sarah and later little Abraham.

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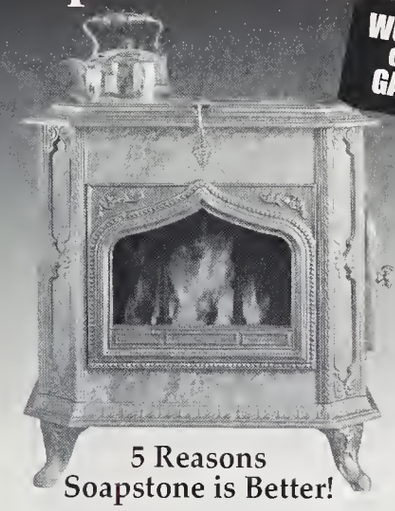

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... The girls on Dutchman Creek near Elkin could build a dam, tuck their skirts in their feedsack bloomers, grab a grapevine and jump in for a splash.
... A girl could be a champion tree climber in her community.
... You used the dasher and wooden churn to make butter.
... You attended a corn shucking and raced to see who could get the most red ears.
... You watched the wheat threshing machine at work at grandma's and ate the leftovers at dinnertime.

From Callie, Beaufort County
... Fried dill pickles are on the menu.

From Janice and Preston Mobley, Pink Hill
... You know what "lighter knot" is, where to find it and what it smells like.
... When you see someone cutting a big barrel in half, they are making a new pig cooker.
... When you walk in the house and your eyes water and your nose runs from the smell of vinegar, and you know someone's making a sauce for a pig-picking.
... You know what a looping horse is.

From Rachel Lewis Sawyer, Hertford
... You've put a dozen eggs in an empty oatmeal box for a neighbor.
... You have shared a tub bath by the heater with siblings in the winter and wanted to be sure others ahead of you had not had a "nature call."
... You skimmed cream from milk, put it in a jar and shook until you had butter.
... You had light wood to help get your heater fires going faster.
... You picked potato bugs off plants and put them in a jar, and when you had 100 you got a nickel for a Pepsi.
... Someone took your chewing gum off the bedpost.
... You put old doorknobs in hen nests, so the hens would go back.

From Ruth Watson, Mount Airy
... Bananas were for Sunday pudding and not for daily eating.
... You were too tired to bathe, but you had to wash your feet.
... Saturday was the only day you went to town.
... The first load of tobacco sold meant shoes, so you could return to school.
... You drank a bottle of pop and not a soda.
... Pork 'n' beans, bologna and cheese and a moon pie was a luxury instead of a meal.

From Laura Collins, Rutherfordton
... You've ever had to switch from heat to air-conditioning in the same day.
... All the festivals across the state are named after a fruit, vegetable, grain, insect or animal.
... You install security lights on your house and garage and leave both unlocked.
... You know what "cow tipping" is.
... You only own four spices: salt, pepper, Texas Pete and Duke's mayonnaise.
... The local papers cover national and international news on one page and six pages for local gossip and sports.
... You think that the first day of deer season is a national holiday.
... You find 100 degrees Fahrenheit "a little warm."
... You know all four seasons: almost summer, summer, still summer and Christmas.
... You describe the first cool snap (below 70 degrees) as good pinto-bean weather.
... Fried catfish is the other white meat.

From Connie L. Lowry, Siler City
... You call your Sunday school book a "quartly."
... Your mom calls and you will be there "da-reckly."
... You get a new "frock" for Easter.

From Monique Smith, Erwin
... You know that mustard is not only the yellow stuff in the bottle that you put on hot dogs, but it is also a type of green vegetable.
... You know that pedal pushers are another name for Capri's.
... You sat on the front porch with your grandmother to help her do some cannin'.
... You have to drive down a dirt road to get to church.

From Linda Dewald, Boone
... You know where Hoot Owl Holler is.
... You know where to pick chestnuts up on the mountain.
... You sold pine tips, sassafras roots and wild vines for money.
... You walked the railroad tracks until a train passed and the conductor would throw out candy and suckers.
... You caught lightning bugs and stuck them on your face to glow at night.
... Your elders told you Raw Hide and Bloody Bones would get you if you left the yard.
... You know who Old Tom Dooley was.
... You've made huckleberry jam.
... You have shaved a birch twig down for a toothbrush.

From Marie Wall Harris, Yadkinville

... You know that "fetch it" means bring it to me right now!

... You know that "tag-a-long" means you come with me.

... You know that "slop the hogs" means to feed them.

... You know that the little leg of a chicken is really part of the wing.

... You say, "yank it out" when you mean pull it out.

... You say, "ought!" when something hurts.

... You say, "aught," instead of zero.

... You know "shape up" means quit making a fool of yourself.

... You have painted your fingernails and toenails with pokeberry juice.

... You know that you "gravel" under potato vines for the spuds.

... You say, "I'm give out" when you have worked hard and need to rest.

... You say that you will have something done "in a skip and hop."

... You know that you only wear patched clothes in the field or at home – nowhere else.

... You used white bleached sacks to make sheets and pillowcases.

From Judy G. Greenamyer, Lake Wylie, S.C.

... You ask someone to raise the window down.

... You tell someone not to pay that nary bit of attention.

... They think that'll draw up when it's washed.

... You hear someone say, "Ouch, I stumped my toe!"

... When giving directions to someone lost from another state, you tell them to start all over by going back where they came from.

From Tyler Lee, Hillsborough

... You use daddy's John Deere lawn mower as a cross-country four-wheeler.

... You grow okra and tomatoes in the back pasture.

... You go down a dirt road and see farmers moving cattle from one pasture to another across the road.

... The whole family went to pick strawberries at a "pick-your-own-strawberries" farm.

... You see half of the people that go to your school at Bojangles every morning.

From Cathy Wallace Crumpler, Mount Olive

... You have walked behind your father's John Deere tractor while he was plowing land just to cool your feet in the freshly plowed soil.

... You have walked an oil drum on its side with a cousin and have the scraped knees to prove it.

... You have stayed up late watching falling stars and catching fire flies in Duke's Mayonnaise jars.

... You rode to the beach in the car with the windows down and your feet hanging out the window.

... You have made mud pies (mud chicken legs, mud potatoes or whatever was on the menu) with a Pepsi bottle of water, sandy dirt and mama's old pie tins.

... You have made hula skirts from "chinny ball" tree limbs so you could pretend you were in an exotic place.

... You've climbed pecan trees to retrieve cats, bomb your sister with pecans or just to look down the road to see if the mailman was coming.

From Gaston Dutton, Monroe

... You walked or trotted four miles to church on Sunday because the mules were too tired to pull the buggy.

... You planted excess collards in order to make green collard kraut.

... Some of your bad neighbors stole cured corn at night, placed it in bags and sold it back to the owner who farmed and ran a small country store.

... You were allowed as a small boy to stop work at noon on Saturdays in the summer and go creek hunting for snapping turtles.

... You shucked corn for neighbors after sundown with a lantern and then ate a hearty meal listening to the community banjos, harmonica and fiddlers.

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Art by Stacy Bottoms

Subjects for artist Stacy Bottoms' oils and watercolors range from vintage trucks, churches and country landscapes to a host of women, men and children. Bottoms, who lives in Mt. Pleasant, says painting has been a blessing in his life and his landscapes often remind him of somewhere he has been before. Prices range from $35 for prints to $150 for prints on canvas. "Reflecting on Tweetsie" is a 16-by-20-inch print on archival paper. It sells for $40, in an edition of 100.

(704) 436-9320
www.bottomstudio.com

Magic shows

Chaz Misenheimer of Richfield performs magic shows for a wide variety of events and occasions. A member of Union Power Cooperative, he customizes his shows to suit the event and venue. "Magic by Chaz" is a relaxed brand of magic that appeals to the imagination and focuses on sharing the seemingly impossible. Chaz has three performance options: shows, strolling magic and "close-up tables." He performs magic for parties, banquets, clubs, dining rooms, casino nights, festivals and corporate entertaining.

(800) 650-4084
www.magicbychaz.com

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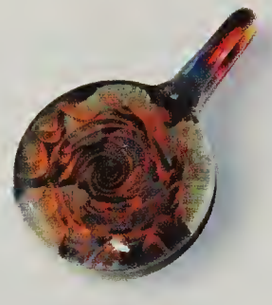


Head Change Arts, based in Pleasant Garden and served by Randolph EMC, makes lampwork glass pieces. Items offered by the husband-and-wife team include a variety of pendants, beads, marbles, magnifying glasses, pens, tops, Christmas ornaments, vases, jars and other solid and hollow pieces. The glass is borosilicate (hard glass). Pens range from $15 to $18, magnifying glasses are $30 to $35, and pendants $10 to $40. Head Change Arts welcomes custom orders.

336-685-5760
www.headchangearts.com

Endless Possibilities

Endless Possibilities in Manteo is more than a gallery and store for weaved fabric—it's a recycling project that creatively uses castoff fabric from thrift stores. Proceeds from each handmade item sold help support the Outer Banks Hotline, a nonprofit human services organization. Items for sale include flat and shag rugs, tote bags, boas and woven clogs. The store accepts special orders, and also offers classes for beginning weavers. Rugs and totes start at $25.

(252) 475-1575
www.ragweavers.com

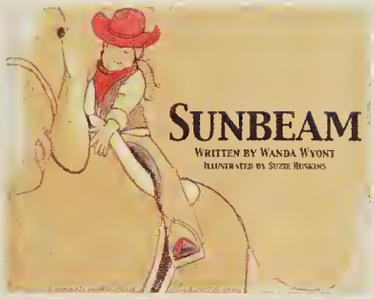
Custom-made leather valances

Artist and designer Carol Stefen, based in the Fines Creek community of Haywood County, makes genuine leather window valances for your home or mountain retreat. All valances are original designs handmade to order. Optional valance patterns include bears, deer, trees and mountains, created in a contrasting color of leather. Valances can be made with either the suede side or the leather side, and can also be reversible. The buttons are cut from trees on her farm. The valances come in three different styles: Durango, Carolina and Westward Ho. The most popular colors are beige, tan, brown, red and burgundy. Prices start at $59.95 (36-inch width). Carol's items are displayed at a new gallery, Otter Ridge Leather Creations in Clyde.

(828) 627-9676
carolsotterridge@bellsouth.net

on the bookshelf

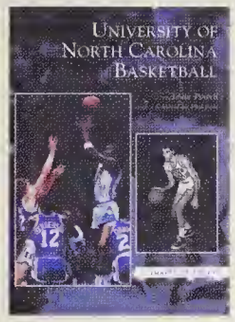
"Sunbeam"



This children's picture book, designed to teach children the awareness of emotions, features a little girl who dreams of horseback riding and of being a cowgirl. She has to learn to deal with her emotions when she mistakenly believes her family has bought her a horse. The story, set in Fallston, builds language skills by introducing equine-related words, and is paired with line drawings. "Sunbeam" is written by Wanda Wyont of Cherryville and illustrated by artist Suzie Huskins, a former Banner Elk resident. Published by Parkway Publishers in Boone. Hardcover, $12.50, 28 pages.

www.parkwaypublishers.com
(800) 821-9155

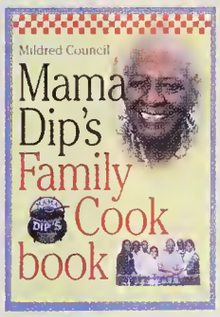
Tar Heels basketball



Nearly 95 years of Tar Heel basketball are commemorated in "University of North Carolina Basketball," a pictorial history that covers the inception of UNC's basketball program to today's status as defending champions. Author Adam Powell's highlights include a foreword by former UNC star player and assistant coach Phil Ford, coverage of UNC's five national championship seasons, images of every player who has had his jersey honored or retired in the rafters of the Dean E. Smith Center, and photographs of home arenas the Tar Heels have played in since 1924. Published by Arcadia Publishing in Mt. Pleasant, S.C. Softcover, $19.99, 128 pages.

(843) 853-2070
www.arcadiapublishing.com

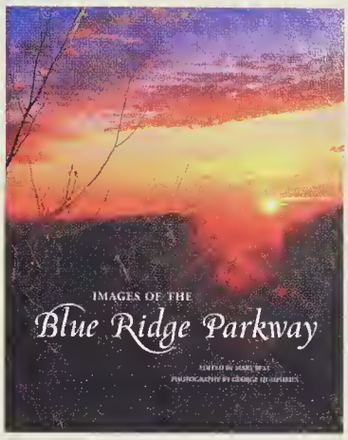
"Mama Dip's Family Cookbook"



In this follow-up to her book "Mama Dip's Kitchen," Mildred "Mama Dip" Council serves up new recipes for home-style Southern cooking. From catfish gumbo to breakfast pizza and peach upside-down cake, her new cookbook offers recipes for more than 300 dishes. Also featured are party and celebration foods for family and community gatherings, along with basic information about staple ingredients, kitchen utensils, measurements and diagrams for setting up a buffet. Published by University of North Carolina Press in Chapel Hill. Softcover, $15.95, 274 pages.

(919) 966-3561
http://uncpress.unc.edu

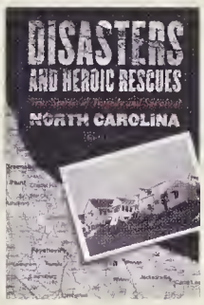
Blue Ridge photographs



Taking readers through six mountain ranges, "Images of the Blue Ridge Parkway" captures Blue Ridge Parkway mountain scenery—sweeping views, pastoral landscapes and summit sanctuaries dotted with rare evergreens, flowers and wildlife. Asheville native and nature photographer George Humphries' scenic tour includes more than 200 photographs of areas from the Great Smoky Mountains to the Shenandoah National Park, including sunsets, waterfalls, spring wildflower shots and autumn foliage vistas. Published by Our State Books. Hardcover, $49.95, 160 pages.

(800) 948-1409
www.ourstate.com

Disasters and rescues



Spanning the early 19th-century through contemporary times, "Disasters and Heroic Rescues of North Carolina" relates 20 dramatic stories of people facing catastrophic events. Accounts include "The Great Fire of 1831 in Fayetteville," "The Great Hurricane of 1899," and the "1925 Coal Glen Mining Disaster in Sanford." Author Scotti Cohn, formerly of North Carolina, intersperses occasional black and white pictures and explores famous floods, train wrecks and B-52 bomber crashes. Published by Globe Pequot Press. Softcover, $13.95, 192 pages.

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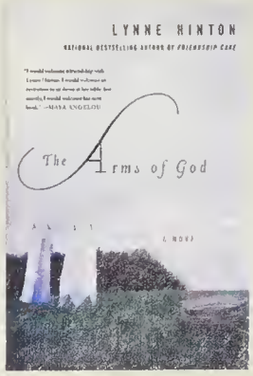
Friendship, love and loss



In her new book, "The Arms of God," author and North Carolina native Lynne Hinton explores themes of women's friendships, love, loss and faith. Alice is making her daughter dinner, when her mother Olivia, who abandoned her at age 4, appears at Alice's door. Olivia's sudden reappearance is like a quiet gift. The key to her mother's past is slowly uncovered and Alice begins understanding the powers of hatred and forgiveness. Published by St. Martin's Press in New York, New York. Hardcover, $24.95, 254 pages.

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Getting To Know...

Maya Angelou

Born: As Marguerite Johnson on April 4, 1928

Known for: Her work as a poet, historian, author, actress, playwright, civil-rights activist, producer and director

Accomplishments: She survived an unusually tough childhood, which included years of not speaking a word, and went on to publish 10 best-selling books and countless magazine articles and essays. Dr. Angelou began her career in drama and dance, and has been a groundbreaker for black women in the film industry. Her renowned autobiographical account of her youth, "I Know Why the Cage Bird Sings," was a two-hour TV special on CBS. Her famous poems include "Still I Rise." She has written and produced several prize-winning documentaries, including "Afro-Americans in the Arts," a PBS special. Dr. Angelou speaks French, Spanish, Italian and West African Fanti. She is a Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem.

Quote: "There is nothing so pitiful as a young cynic because he has gone from knowing nothing to believing nothing."

Field Trip Fun

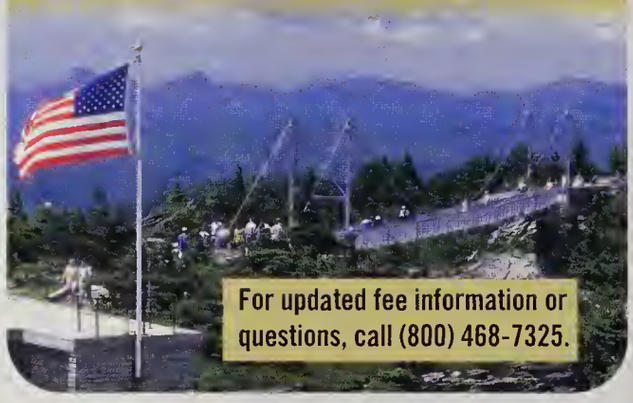
HISTORIC RURAL HILL FARM

Historic Rural Hill Farm in Huntersville was the home of Major John Davidson, American patriot and signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. Today, the 265-acre plantation is the oldest and largest public historic site in Mecklenburg County dating circa 1760, and includes a log cabin reproduction, one-room schoolhouses, the remains of the main plantation house built in 1788 and the final home of the Davidson family, which houses a museum and gift shop. Historic Rural Hill is open year-round except for some holidays. Educational programs are held throughout the year. On **Feb. 18–19**, the farm plans to commemorate the Battle of Cowan's Ford with battle scenes, craftsmen and artisan demonstrations and farm tours. Call 704-875-3113.

Do You Know...

Grandfather Mountain, near Linville, is home to the highest suspension footbridge in the U.S.?

The "Mile-High Swinging Bridge" is named for its elevation above sea level (5,300 feet). The bridge is 228 feet long and spans a chasm 80 feet deep. It was first constructed in a plant in Greensboro and later erected on Grandfather Mountain in 1952. The first person to cross the bridge was Merle Umstead, the 9-year-old daughter of Gov. William B. Umstead. Other features at Grandfather Mountain include museum exhibits about the region's national history, a theater that shows nature movies, and more than 12 miles of alpine hiking trails. Guests can purchase tickets and drive through the park.



classroom chuckle

What did the math teacher make for dessert?

i!d

We'd like to hear from you!

If you have suggestions or comments about our bimonthly youth page, Tar Heel Lessons, e-mail editor@carolinacountry.com, write Carolina Country Tar Heel Lessons, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611, or call (800) 662-8835, ext. 3036.

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For more about Grandfather Mountain, visit www.grandfather.com

For Historic Rural Hill Farm, www.ruralhillfarm.org

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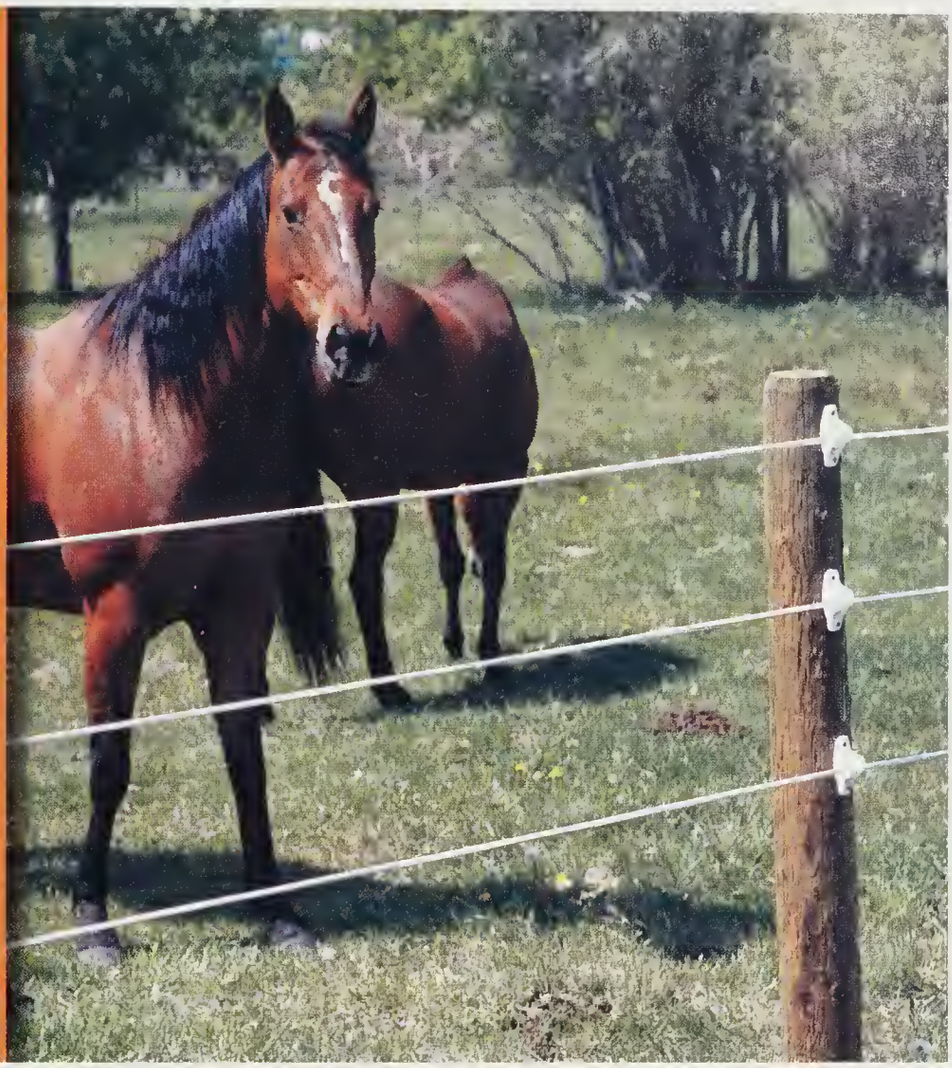
Lewis Sapp
Territory Manager



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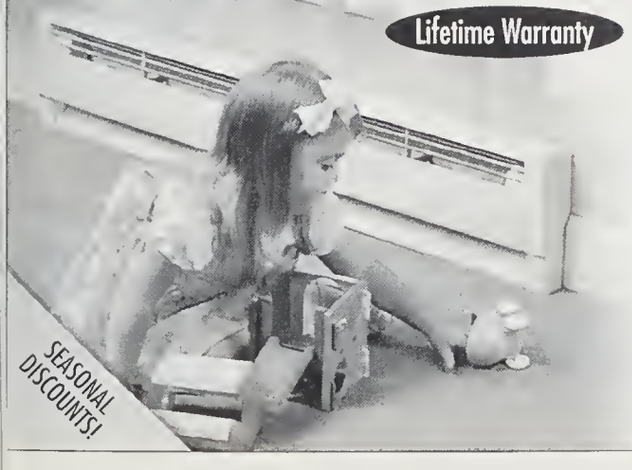

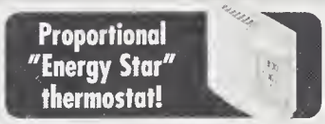

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SCRAMBLED#10

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A		A	R	D	E		C	M	
B	B			A	C	M			
C	C					S		D	A
D	D					A		L	
E	R			B		E			
F	A	S		C		D			R
G	E	C		M					
H					A				M
I	M	R	A	E	D		L	S	

Arrange the nine letters in SCRAMBLED so that each letter appears only once in each column, each row and each 3 x 3 square. To solve, eliminate the impossiblities in each of the 81 cells.

Say Watt?

U	T	E	F
I	A	O	B
F	L	D	N
U	O	A	E
W	L	M	N

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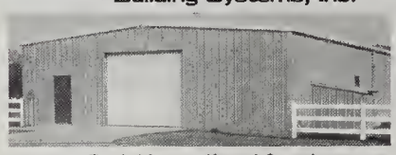

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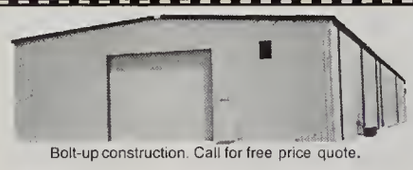

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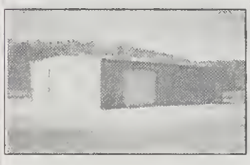

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February Events

Visit the exhibit "Pantry to Pedestal" through June 4 at the High Point Museum to learn about the evolution of Seagrove Pottery. Call (336) 883-3022 for more information.

MOUNTAINS

Coffee House Talent Night
Feb. 11, West Jefferson
(336) 846-2787

Simple Gifts
International folk music
Feb. 25, West Jefferson
(336) 846-2787

PIEDMONT

African American Reading
Saturdays & Sundays, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

African American History Tour
Saturdays, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Julian Bond, speaker
Feb. 1, Fayetteville
(910) 672-1474
www.uncfsu.edu

"Talking Heads II"
Feb. 2–5, Fayetteville
(910) 678-7186
www.theartscouncil.com/gilbert

"Let's Go Science Show"
Feb. 3, Yanceyville
(336) 694-4591

East Coast Rodeo
Feb. 3–4, Charlotte
(704) 882-6994

History Stories for Children
Feb. 4, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Rhonda Vincent & the Rage
Feb. 4, Biscoe
(910) 572-1313
www.rhondavincent.com

Cape Fear Botanical Garden
Free, Feb. 4, Fayetteville
(910) 486-0221
www.capefearbg.org

North Carolina Symphony
Feb. 7, Fayetteville
(877) 627-6724
www.ncsymphony.org

James Ransome, illustrator
Feb. 7, Charlotte
(704) 337-2000
www.mintmuseum.org

Gold!
Feb. 8, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

"Talking Heads II"
Feb. 10–12, Fayetteville
(910) 678-7186
www.theartscouncil.com/gilbert

"Hard Time Days"
Feb. 11, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

The Grascals
Feb. 11, Oakboro
(704) 485-3649
www.oakboromusichall.com

Outdoor Show & Family Fun
Feb. 11, Albemarle
(704) 985-1965

Butter Making
Feb. 11–12, High Point
(336) 885-1859
www.highpointmuseum.org

Unheard Voices Tour
Feb. 11–12, Charlotte
(704) 335-0325
www.historicrosedale.org

Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra
Feb. 12, Fayetteville
(910) 433-4690
www.fayettevillesymphony.org

Scott Ainslie, musician
Feb. 12, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

"Talking Heads II"
Feb. 17–19, Fayetteville
(910) 678-7186
www.theartscouncil.com/gilbert

Civil War Cavalry
Feb. 18–19, Huntersville
(704) 875-2312
www.lattaplantation.org

Aaron Flagg, trumpeter
Feb. 19, Fayetteville
(910) 672-1276
www.uncfsu.edu

Kapla Block Building Contest
Feb. 19, Durham
(919) 220-5429
www.ncmls.org

Big Country Bluegrass
Feb. 25, Oakboro
(704) 485-3649
www.oakboromusichall.com

Animal Department Tour
Feb. 25, Durham
(919) 220-5429
www.ncmls.org

Specialty Crops School
March 3, Roxboro
(919) 603-1350

COAST

Hope Clinic Ball
Feb. 4, New Bern
(252) 249-1904

Julee Glaub & Mark Weems
Feb. 4, Beaufort
(252) 504-2787
www.downeastfolkarts.org

Carolina Chocolate Festival
Feb. 4–5, Morehead City
(877) 848-4976
www.carolinachocolatefestival.com

Wildlife Festival/Decoy Carving
Feb. 10–12, Washington
(252) 946-2897
www.eastcarolinawildfowlguild.com

"The Gift of Love" musical
Feb. 11 & 16, Edenton
(252) 482-4621

February Events *continued*

Glenn Miller Orchestra
Feb. 16, Morehead City
(252) 247-3883

African American Blues Concert
Feb. 17, Manteo
(252) 475-1500

Farm Toy Show
Feb. 17–18, Edenton
(252) 221-8727

Degas Quartet
Feb. 18, Oriental
(252) 249-3362

Hertford Sweetheart Encore
Feb. 18, Hertford
(252) 426-1425
www.visitperquimans.com

Roanoke Island 1862
Feb. 18–19, Manteo
(252) 475-1500
www.roanokeisland.com

Empty Bowls Hunger Event
Feb. 22, Morehead City
(252) 354-5278
www.emptybowls.org

"Unforgettable" Nat King Cole Story
Feb. 25, Greenville
(800) 328-2787
www.ecuarts.com

230th Anniversary Commemoration
Moore's Creek National Battlefield
Feb. 25–26, Currie
(910) 283-5591
www.nps.gov/mocr

Common Ground Jazz Music
March 3, Oriental
(252) 249-3362

NOW SHOWING

A LISTING OF EXHIBITS

MOUNTAINS

"It's Raining Cats and Dogs"
Through Feb. 10,
West Jefferson
Ashe County Arts Center
(336) 846-2787
www.ashecountyarts.org

"Meeting of the Minds"
Through Feb. 26, Hickory
Hickory Museum of Art
(828) 327-8576
www.hickorymuseumofart.org

Carl Moser Photography
Through March 12, Hickory
Hickory Museum of Art
(828) 327-8576
www.hickorymuseumofart.org

"Needlework & Quilts"
Through April 1, Kings Mountain, Kings Mountain Historical Museum
(704) 739-1019

Tom Mate, Artist
Through April 9, Hickory
Hickory Museum of Art
(828) 327-8576
www.hickorymuseumofart.org

"Our Earth & Beyond"
Mary Edna Fraser
Through April 23, Hickory
Hickory Museum of Art
(828) 327-8576
www.hickorymuseumofart.org

CAROLINA COUNTRY adventures

Blue Mist BBQ in Asheboro.

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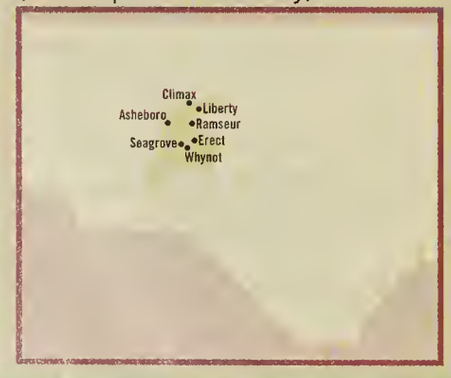

Driving the curvy country roads in the south part of the county you notice the houses are far apart, just like the independently named towns. Whynot, a burg just south of Seagrove, got its name from a fellow at a too-long town meeting who suggested "Why not name the town 'Whynot' and let's go home!" The town of Erect was named after the splendid standing posture of native Tom Bray. In Seagrove, pottery is the name of the game with a slew of homey artist studios to visit. The award-winning North Carolina Zoo lies just outside Asheboro, the county seat. Dip tortilla chips at Asheboro's many Mexican eateries or savor smoky 'cue at Hop's Bar-B-Que and the nostalgic Blue Mist BBQ. To view working farms, try Goat Lady Dairy in Climax and Rising Meadow Farm (sheep and cattle) in Liberty. For nightlife, kick up your cowboy boots at Rand Ol' Opry in Ramseur or do some foot-stompin' at Fiddler's Cove in Liberty.

Three top spots:

Pisgah Covered Bridge: One of North Carolina's few remaining covered bridges, it recalls a bygone era of horse and wagon. The bridge, which now serves only foot traffic, nestles in a wooded area outside Asheboro with picnic tables and a loop trail for hiking.

Uwharrie National Forest: About 10 miles south of Asheboro, the forest's Birkhead Mountain Wilderness entrance offers trails through ancient volcanic mountains and remnants of Indian and pioneer settlements. The 13 miles of interconnected trails can be reached from two trailheads off Lassiter Mill Road.

North Carolina Aviation Museum: The collection of vintage military aircraft, dating from World War II through Vietnam, is housed in two hangars in Asheboro. Warbirds there include a T-6 Texan, a Flitfire and C-45. The museum also displays authentic military uniforms and a noteworthy collection of model airplanes.

Learn of other nearby adventures and events:

(800) 626-2672
www.VisitRandolph.org

PIEDMONT

"Winter in the Piedmont"
Through Feb. 19, Gastonia
Schiele Museum
(704) 866-6900
www.schielemuseum.org

"The Land of Make-Believe"
Through Feb. 26, Charlotte
Mint Museum of Art
(704) 337-2000
www.mintmuseum.org

"Secret Games"
Feb. 11–May 7, Charlotte
Mint Museum of Art
(704) 337-2000
www.mintmuseum.org

"Vantage Point V"
Feb. 25–July 16, Charlotte
Mint Museum of Art
(704) 337-2000
www.mintmuseum.org

"Uncommon Threads"
Through March 12,
Fayetteville
Fayetteville Museum of Art
(910) 485-5121
www.fay-moa.org

"The Potter's Eye"
Through March 19, Raleigh
N.C. Museum of Art
(919) 839-6262
http://ncartmuseum.org

"Brain: The World Inside Your Head"
Through May 7, Raleigh
N.C. Museum of
Natural Sciences
(919) 733-7450
www.naturalsciences.org

"American Roots"
Through May 19, Carrboro
The ArtsCenter
(919) 929-2787
www.artscenterlive.org

"Pantry to Pedestal"
The Evolution of
Seagrove Pottery
Through June 4, High Point
(336) 883-3022

COAST

"Don Payne & the Simpsons"
Through Feb. 11, Wilmington
Cape Fear Museum
(910) 341-4350
www.capefearmuseum.com

"Elements of Nature and Art"
Through Feb. 12, Wilmington
Cameron Arts Museum
(910) 395-5999
www.cameronartmuseum.com

Dorothy Gillespie: Reflections
Through Feb. 12, Wilmington
Cameron Arts Museum
(910) 395-5999
www.cameronartmuseum.com

"From Memory: Maud Gatewood"
Through April 19, Wilmington
Cameron Arts Museum
(910) 395-5999
www.cameronartmuseum.com

"Living Small: Crafting Miniatures"
Through April 23, Wilmington
Cape Fear Museum
(910) 341-4350
www.capefearmuseum.com

Listing Information

Deadlines:
For April: February 24
For May: March 24

Submit Listings Online: Visit www.carolinacountry.com and click "See NC" to add your event to the magazine and/or our Web site. Or e-mail events@carolinacountry.com

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By Carla Burgess

Mother Nature's Timetable

"Purple crocuses up." "Wild columbine swollen with buds." "Cabbage white eggs on collards." "First mosquito bite." These are just a few notations I made in a pocket calendar I started carrying around in 2004. I knew that other gardeners, farmers and naturalists have long kept such records, but didn't realize that this type of observation had a scientific name. Phenology, as it's called, is the study of the changes in plants and animals in response to seasonal cycles. Laypeople as well as researchers contribute to the body of knowledge. Scientists are interested in the simple observations we make in our own yards, neighborhoods and parks throughout the year. The National Phenology Network encourages individuals throughout the United States to keep notes and submit data on selected species in their area. In North Carolina, the network monitors eastern redbud, wild strawberry, red maple and black locust, to name a few. These valuable records provide interesting comparisons between different geographical regions, as well as help researchers assess the impacts of climate change. To submit your own information, visit the network's Web site at: www.uwm.edu/Dept/Geography/npn Or contact Mark D. Schwartz, Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201, (414) 229-3740.

Master Gardeners: Show Yourselves!

Ever wondered what a "master gardener" is? You've probably spoken to one if you've ever called your county Cooperative Extension Service with a question. Master Gardeners are part of the agency's volunteer staff and receive special training in exchange for community service in the field of horticulture. When the Master Gardener program began in 1979, volunteers mostly answered telephone requests for gardening information. Today, the opportunities have expanded greatly. Recently, Master Gardeners have created and maintained demonstration gardens; led gardening projects for the elderly and disabled and for economically disadvantaged youth; planned community beautification projects; and managed plant diagnostics labs. Gardeners accepted into the program receive a minimum of 40 hours of training on topics including lawns; ornamental trees and shrubs; insect, disease and weed management; soils and plant nutrition; and vegetable gardening. Once certified, Master Gardeners must volunteer a minimum of 40 hours the first year and 20 hours each subsequent year. In North Carolina, 73 counties offer the program, and more than 3,000 volunteers currently participate. To learn more, call your county Cooperative Extension Service office or visit www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/masgar

Budding and blooming are of interest to phenologists, who study seasonal changes in plants and animals.

Coconut Fiber Bricks

As an alternative to peat for seed-starting or potting mix, try coir. The fibrous material comes from the outer husk of coconuts. Unlike peat, it is a renewable resource. There's less dust, and it is easier to moisten. Coir is sold in compressed blocks (usually about the size of a masonry brick) under a variety of brand names. When soaked in a gallon of hot water, a brick expands to about 6–8 times its size, making 4–6 quarts of fluffy planting mixture. You can cut it with perlite or vermiculite to create absorbent potting soil. The bricks cost about $2–3 each. Not yet a staple in all garden supply centers, coir bricks are more widely available from online and mail-order sources.

If You Think You're Underqualified ...

Some gardeners know a lot less than you do. These are actual questions asked of Master Gardeners, according to Erv Evans, N.C. State University Consumer Horticulturist:

- "I have atheists on my houseplant. How do I get rid of them?"
- "How do you plant bluegrass sod? Green side up or down?"
- "I want to grow kudzu. How do I get started?"
- "Can I put formaldehyde on my vegetable garden to kill fusarium wilt on my tomatoes?"
- "What is an insexicide?" (asked by a 4-year-old gardener)

Hort Shorts

- Cut back new growth on butterfly bushes by one-third to one-half for better shape and bloom come summer.
- Not sure what kind of turf grass is right for you? Use this handy interactive tool to see which fits your needs and climate: www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/turfselect

GO ONLINE

Carla Burgess can be reached at ncgardenshare@mindspring.com

For more gardening advice, go to the "Carolina Gardens" section of www.carolinacountry.com

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Storm/screen doors reduce energy loss

Adding either storm doors or combination storm/screen doors can save energy in almost any home. Most primary entry doors are efficient these days, but creating the extra dead air space by adding a storm door will further reduce energy loss.

Even though the storm door may not have the same level of weather stripping as the primary door, just breaking the direct force of the wind will reduce its pressure and leakage. Also, by protecting the primary door from harsh weather conditions, the primary door weather stripping will hold up many years longer.

Before you go out and buy your storm doors, make sure your existing primary entry doors are in good condition. Installing a storm door over an old, uninsulated, leaky front or back door will help some, but you would likely be better off just replacing the primary door. Check and repair the weather stripping on your existing primary doors and determine the proper door sizes so the storm door will fit in close.

Combination storm/screen doors are likely your best option for year-round energy savings. Some designs are very secure with deadbolt-type latches, so you can leave your primary entry door open for ventilation.

The primary features to look for in combination doors are strong construction materials and good-quality weather stripping and workmanship. Check the corner construction design and how well the glass panels fit. Twist the door to get a relative sense of its rigidity under the force of the wind.

For a front door, you might consider selecting an ornate solid wood combination door with a reasonable amount of decorative glass. The best and strongest ones use true mortise and tenon joints at the rails and stiles. The less ornate, simpler ones are good for a back door. Consider installing heavy 23-gauge stainless steel screen in the back for security.

Some very ornate steel and wrought iron doors also provide security. These come with deadbolt-type locks and double vault pins that secure it into the frame. These are also available as double doors or with sidelights.

Creating extra dead air space by adding a storm door will further reduce energy loss.

Another decorative option is a door made of a composite of crushed rock and fiberglass. These are a full one-inch thick and because they are molded, there are no seams or screws.

Standard foam or particleboard-filled aluminum skin doors are most common, reasonably priced, and found at most home center stores. They are easy to install yourself. High-style models are available for the front door. A self-storing model with two sliding glass panes provides the best ventilation. By lowering the top glass pane a little and raising the bottom one, effective low-to-high air ventilation flow is created.

The following companies offer storm/screen doors:

Cumberland Woodcraft (800) 367-1884 www.cumberlandwoodcraft.com

Homeguard Industries (800) 525-1885 www.home-guard.net

Pella (800) 328-6596 www.pella.com

Sugarcreek Industries (800) 669-4711 www.sugarcreekindustries.com

Send inquiries to: James Dulley, Carolina Country, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244 www.dulley.com

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Chocolate Cherry Heart

- 1 package (15 ounces) refrigerated pie pastry
- 2 teaspoons all-purpose flour
- 1 egg white, beaten
- ¼ cup ground almonds
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- ¼–½ teaspoon almond extract
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 jar (16 ounces) hot fudge ice cream topping
- 2 cans (21 ounces each) cherry pie filling

Let pastry stand at room temperature for 15–20 minutes. Unfold pastry and place each circle on an ungreased baking sheet. Sprinkle each with 1 teaspoon flour; turn over. Using a 9-inch paper heart pattern, cut out a heart from each circle. Prick pastries all over with a fork. Brush with egg white. Combine almonds and sugar; sprinkle over pastries. Bake at 450 degrees for 7–9 minutes or until lightly browned. Carefully slide crusts onto wire racks to cool.

In a mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and almond extract; beat until smooth. Add cream; beat until thickened.

Place one crust on a serving plate; spread with half of fudge topping. Carefully spread with half of the cream cheese mixture; top with half of the cherry pie filling. Top with remaining crust, fudge topping and cream cheese mixture. Spoon remaining cherry pie filling to within 1-inch of edges. Chill until set. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 6–8 servings.

Cream Cheese Dessert Wedges

- 1 tube (7½ ounces) refrigerated buttermilk biscuits
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

Topping

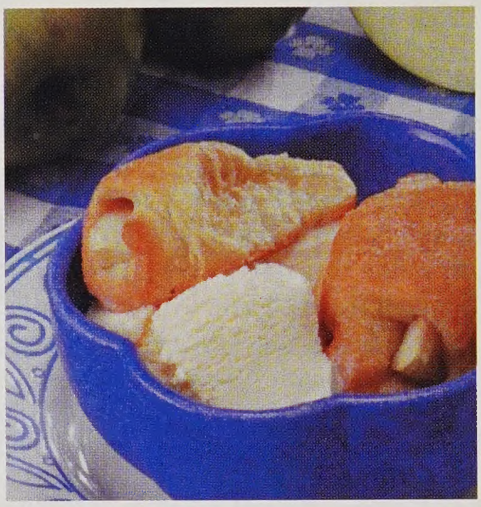
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Separate biscuits into 10 pieces; place in an ungreased 9-inch round baking dish. Press onto the bottom and up the sides, pinching edges together to seal. Bake at 350 degrees for 5–7 minutes or until slightly puffed.

Meanwhile, in a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, sugar, egg and flour until smooth; pour over crust. Combine topping ingredients; sprinkle over filling. Bake for 15–20 minutes or until filling is set and crust is golden brown.

Cool on a wire rack for at least 30 minutes before cutting. Serve warm or chilled. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 8–10 servings.



Apple Dumpling Bake

- 2 tubes (8 ounces each) refrigerated crescent rolls
- 2 medium Granny Smith apples, peeled and cored
- 1 cup sugar
- ⅓ cup butter, melted
- ¾ cup Mountain Dew soda
- Ground cinnamon
- Vanilla ice cream

Unroll crescent rolls and separate dough into 16 triangles. Cut each apple into eight wedges. Wrap a crescent dough triangle around each apple wedge. Place in a greased 13-by-9-by-2-inch baking dish.

In a bowl, combine sugar and butter; sprinkle over rolls. Slowly pour the soda around the rolls (do not stir). Sprinkle with cinnamon. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 35–40 minutes or until golden brown. Serve immediately with ice cream.

Yield: 16 dumplings.

Recipes are by Taste of Home magazine. For a sample copy, send $2 to Taste of Home, Suite 4321, PO Box 990, Greendale WI 53129-0990. Visit the Web page at www.tasteofhome.com

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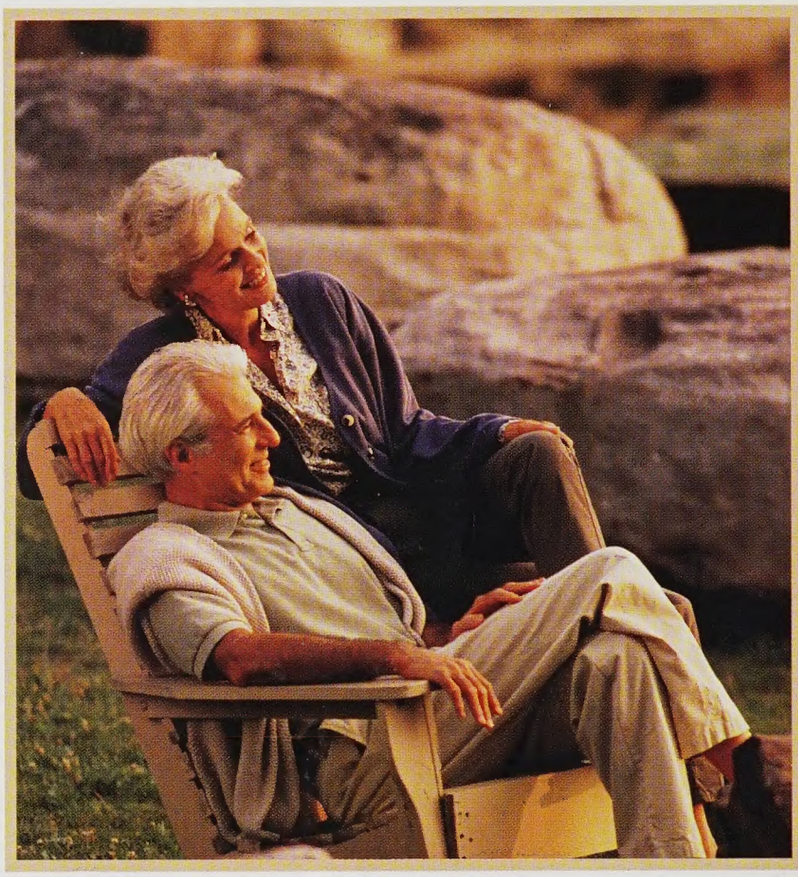

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